



SECRETS OF THE FAN FILM AWARD WINNERS

STAR WARS[®]

INSIDER

OBI-WAN EXPOSED

Ewan McGregor on Fans, Fame, and Nude Scenes

MASTER OF EVIL CHRISTOPHER LEE

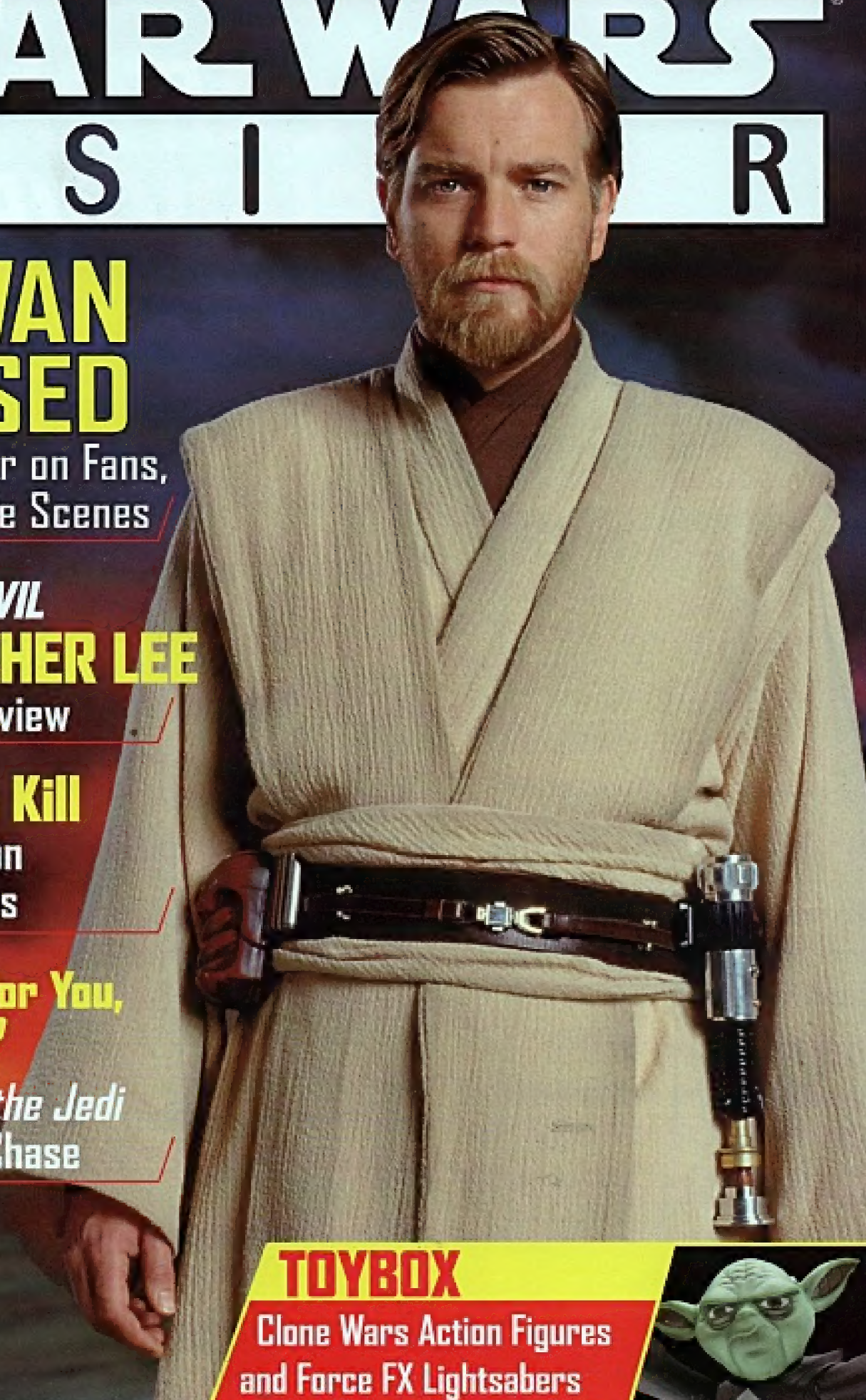
Exclusive Interview

Dressed to Kill

Trisha Biggar on Prequel Designs

Fast Enough for You, Old Man?

The Return of the Jedi Speeder Bike Chase



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Insider 72

Features

Prequel Update

by Insider Staff

As shooting comes to a close, the action heats up, and Rick McCallum chats with the Fan Club editors on the set of Episode III.

Ready for Anything

by Gabriela Tcharner-Patao

Ewan McGregor is quickly becoming one of the biggest stars of his generation, and one of the most versatile actors, with roles in films from *Trainspotting* to *Down With Love* to *Star Wars Episode III*.

How To Make a Star Wars Fan Film

by Mark Rusciano

One of this year's *Star Wars* Fan Film Award finalists shows you how it's done.

The Need for Speed

by Ron Magid

The action might be close to the ground, but the Endor forest chase scene rivals any space battle for its technical wizardry.

Designed Simplicity

by Francis K. Lalumière

Trisha Biggar discusses the challenge of designing costumes for the Prequels while always keeping an eye on the classic trilogy.

The 2003 Star Wars Fan Film Awards

by Dave Gross

The finalists confide their hopes and dreams before the ceremony, and then we see the triumph of victory and the agony of defeat.

Grand Master

by Marcus Hearn

Christopher Lee personifies evil in many of his roles, but never so much as when portraying the elegant but duplicitous Count Dooku.

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In Episode III, Ewan McGregor brings Obi-Wan Kenobi closer to the role created by Alec Guinness... and much closer to his fateful conflict with Darth Vader.



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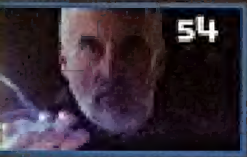
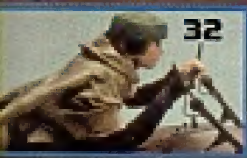
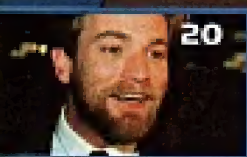
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The Emperor's throne room is a great setting for a little family drama.

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by Jason Feg

He helped bring *The New Jedi Order* into this world, and now he'll take it out. James Luceno talks about *The Unifying Force*, the final volume in the 19-book saga.



The Star Wars Experience

It Takes All Kinds



"What kind of fan are you?"

At San Diego Comic-Con International, I found myself asking that question a lot. Practically everyone answered it without so much as blinking: "Goth/anime/comics," "Movies/horror/books," or "Star Trek/Babylon 5/Farscape" were typical answers. What was surprising was that even *Star Wars* fans would refine their answers.

"Toys/movies/books," said one.

Another, who I already knew as a collector, said something like, "Kenner/posters/sculptures." Instantly I could imagine the inside of his apartment.

Sometimes I hear the same question asked another way. Usually this query comes when someone doesn't leap at the same opportunity as a fellow fan.

"Look, it's Jeremy Bulloch! Let's get him to sign our stuff."

"Nah, I'm not really into autographs."

"What kind of fan are you?"

"I'm going to the New Jedi Order panel."

"Who cares about the books?"

The great thing about such diversity among *Star Wars* fans is that so many people can be part of the same overall experience. Some hardcore special-effects nuts were chatting at dinner one night while their comrades stared blankly across the table. Then someone mentioned the Marvel comics, and suddenly everyone was in on the conversation. Talk long enough about *Star Wars*, and you always find a topic that has everyone nodding in agreement.

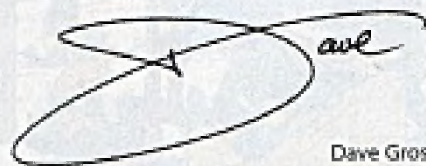
"Yeah, Han definitely shot first."

Now and then we see letters from a few readers who just don't care about one part of the magazine. Sometimes they don't read the fiction and just want celebrity interviews; maybe they love behind-the-scenes articles but have no use for the toys. That's usually all right by them, since they like the rest of the magazine. Occasionally, however, there's one who doesn't understand why every *Star Wars* fan doesn't have exactly the same taste. What kind of fan is everyone else, anyway?

Fortunately, most of us realize you don't have to read the books, collect the toys, create your own artwork, or be able to describe the inner workings of the *Millennium Falcon* to be a true *Star Wars* fan. You could be into any of those things—or none of them—and still have a passion for the movies or the fantastic galaxy they introduced to millions of viewers. That's why we'll continue to cover all kinds of *Star Wars* experiences in *Insider*, from collecting to comics, from novels to fan club activities, with interviews, behind-the-scenes features, and Expanded Universe coverage in between.

Me, I'm usually not so much for the toys, which gets me in datch with the collecting fanatics—although the Vader FX lightsaber kind of changed that this month. Call me a movies/books/effects/lightsaber fan.

But enough about me. What kind of fan are you? Let us know in an email or a postcard.



Dave Gross
Editor-in-Chief

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Shooting stormtroopers is lots of fun, until you get to know them. *Star Wars* Empire takes you to the other side of the Rebellion's front.

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88 Star Wars Q&A

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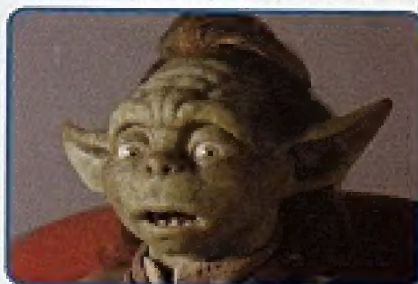
Why do lightsabers cast a shadow? How come it's bad to come out of hyperspace too close to your destination? And what does Yoda really know about the Sith?

90 Last Page

by Tony Moxley

Kids these days—they have no respect.

Our timing was close, but not close enough. Your fabulous Halloween photos came in just in time for the other holiday season, so send your 2003 photos right now, and we'll save them. In addition to all the great photos, you sent us plenty of other letters, so we'll keep the witty banter to a minimum and let you do the talking this issue.



My Favorite Alien

My third favorite aliens are the **Trandoshans**. They just have that "Don't mess with me!" kind of attitude that I think is awesome. My second favorite are **Wookiees**, not just because Chewbacca is one but also because they were enslaved by the Empire and yet didn't lose all hope. It takes real heroes to be able to do that. And my all-time favorite aliens are, I think, the most interesting ones around, simply because we don't know anything about them. We don't know their home planet; we don't know their average height; we don't know their average lifespan; we don't even know what the name of their species is! I'm talking about the alien species to which Jedi Master **Yaddle** and Jedi Master **Yoda** belong. They're just so funny looking, yet wise and brave. And Yoda is absolutely the coolest guy around. He's the greatest superhero I've ever seen.

Stephen Stanaker
Cypress, CA

Arcona. The triangle-headed, gold-eyed wonder that first introduces us to the Mos Eisley Cantina has always been my favorite. The inclusion of a talking Arcona on one of the



Coruscant Holo-ads made *Attack of the Clones* for me. Sadly, Lucas has yet to answer the lingering question: What exactly does its body look like?

Hutts. What can be said that hasn't been said already? Finally, an alien that defies the conventional humanoid appearance, baffles fan filmmakers around the world, and has a voice so unbelievably deep that hardly anyone can do a good impression. Kudos to Jabba!

Sullustan. Hey, you gotta love Nien Nunb's laugh. And with lips that big, you can bet his whole species sounds that way, too.



I'm still hoping for a **Barabel** in Episode III. Those big, scaly, Jedi-loving lizards deserve their five seconds of fame.

Andrew Gilbertson
Tacoma, WA

Without a doubt, getting your magazine in the mail is greater than getting a Krayt dragon pearl for Christmas. Every time it comes, I stop what I'm doing, run to my room, and read it. I

Rebel Rumblings, continued on page 83

Wanna Rumble?

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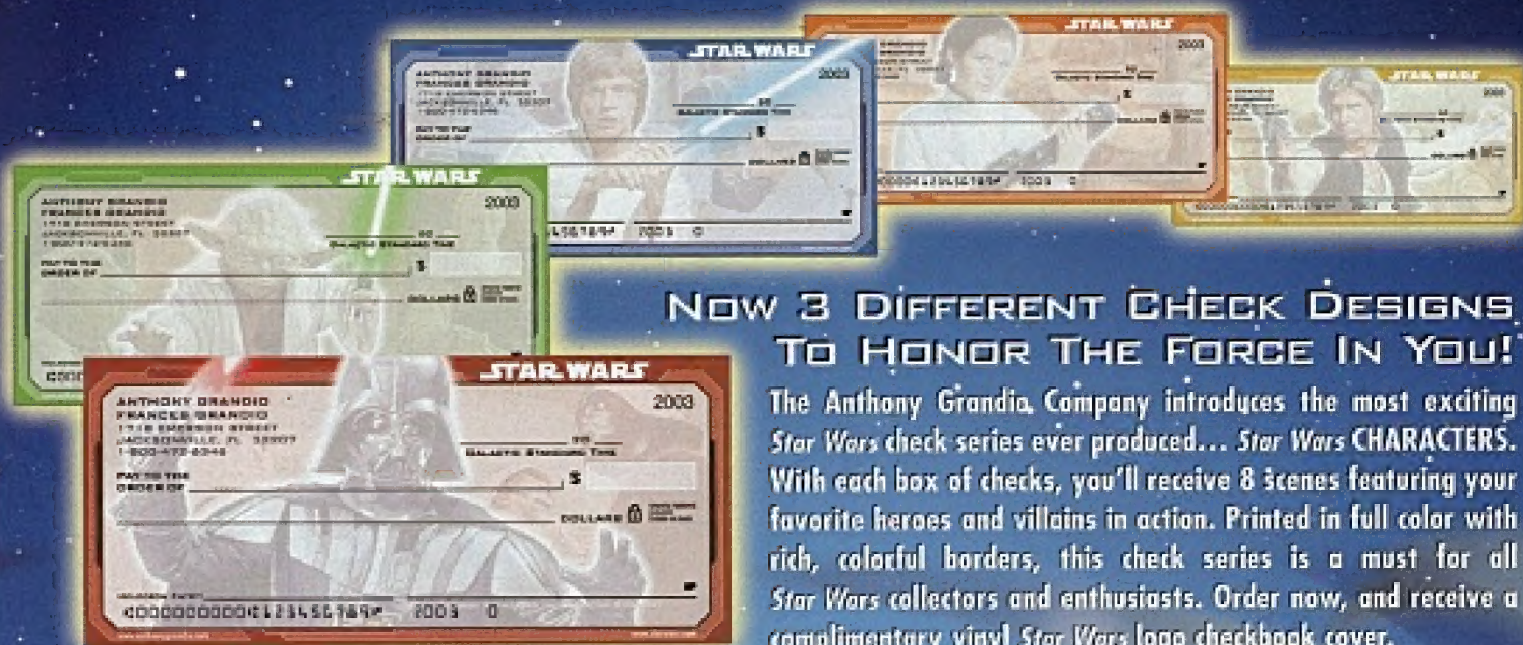
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STAR WARS



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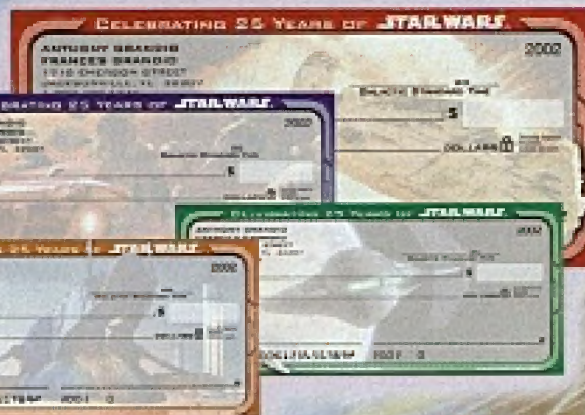


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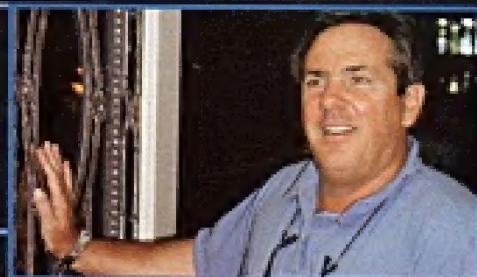
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PREQUEL

Rick McCallum



He was one of the first people we saw at Fox Studios in Sydney, Australia. Unfortunately, he was zipping past us in a golf cart, and a friendly wave was all he could give us as he sped on to his next appointment. Later, our scheduled meeting with him was swapped for a quick interview with stunt coordinator Nick Gillard. When we saw him next, it was at lunch, and he was in deep conversation with director George Lucas, so we didn't dare interrupt. By the second day of our visit, we were beginning to wonder whether our face-to-face interview with producer Rick McCallum was going to happen.

At last, our guide cloistered us in a chamber that had once served as Natalie Portman's dressing room. Soon after, McCallum joined us for a Q&A session full of answers so forthright about the next movie that we have to save most of them for future issues. In compensation, he made sure we can show you another gallery of fresh images from the set of Episode III.

At that point, nearly halfway through the production process with post-production

about to begin, McCallum said he felt "relieved more than excited" at the milestone. With no disasters on the set and a timetable that projected an early wrap (in fact, the production did wrap five days earlier than scheduled), the producer was ready to move on to the next stage in bringing Episode III to fruition. "I've been here for almost eleven months," he said. "So I'm ready to go home."

Production was not the only thing that was ahead of schedule. George Lucas presented the final draft of the movie two days before his deadline. "I was pleased at how good it was," McCallum said. In the previous two films, he explained, much of the screenplay was finished after shooting had begun, but this time he thinks the story is all there. "I think [George] really cracked it on this one."

The atmosphere on the set changed shortly before our arrival. "It changed when Natalie left," McCallum explained. "That side of the story was completely gone, and we don't have any major drama sequences coming now. It's just pure action." All of the scenes we saw involved

intense lightsaber battles. Even without the special effects, the intensity of the combat was stunning, and it put a question in our minds: Who would win in a real fight, Hayden or Ewan?

"Hayden," says McCallum instantly. "He's had more time [to train], and he's out for blood now."

For the record, everyone else we asked—from Nick Gillard to George Lucas—agreed that while Hayden may once have been the learner, now he is the master.

One big difference between Episode III and its predecessors is that the entire production has unfolded under the watchful eye of the webcam (check it out at hyperspace.com), and it will continue to in post-production. "The webcam is very cool," McCallum said. "I don't know if you guys have been seeing it, but I love it. Because it's not in contiguous time, people don't feel it's catching them looking like an idiot. If you're really lucky, you can pick your nose and not get caught. I like it because it's just that message that we're not taking this too seriously." 🍌

Rumor Shooting Gallery

These are Rick McCallum's straight answers to rumors, so look away now if you want to be completely spoiler-free!

One of the principal characters has a near-nude scene.
No. Topless.

We read on Hyperspace that you said there's another character who's a clone.
Uh, I did. But you can't believe [everything you read online]. In the middle of that set I had to go out and take a telephone call, and Pablo continued, and he gets me into so much trouble.

Chewbacca delivers the children to safety.
Negative.

You've employed a bunch of basketball players to be Wookies.
That's true. They're [incredibly] tall. Scary.

Temuera Morrison has a role in Episode III.
Yeah, he's already finished.

UPDATE₇₂

FROM THE SET OF **EPISODE III**

By Dave Gross

Photos by Paul Tiller



Photos by Paul Tiller



Key Hairdresser Annette Miles got to work on the much shorter locks of actor Ewan McGregor every morning, as the Jedi Master's hair style evolved toward the look of Sir Alec Guinness in Episode IV.

These guys are serious! Actors Hayden Christensen (left) and Ewan McGregor practiced their climactic battle hours a day under the watchful eye of Stunt Coordinator Nick Gillard.

PREQUEL UPDATE 72

Photo by Mervyn Merton



Photo by Paul Tiller



Obi-Wan Kenobi (left, actor Ewan McGregor) and Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) traverse the lobby of a Trade Federation cruiser.

Actor Hayden Christensen sits patiently in the Hair and Make-Up Department waiting for that day's transformation to take place—a prelude to a much more dramatic one later in Episode III.

Photo by Paul Tiller



If they're sharing a confidence, we think the Jedi Council should know about it—now! Anakin Skywalker (left, actor Hayden Christensen) and Supreme Chancellor Palpatine (actor Ian McDiarmid) discuss something of importance in Palpatine's office.



Photo by Paul Tiller

Taking a short stroll on the veranda of Padmé Amidala's Coruscant apartment are the Senator's handmaidens, Ellé (left, actress Chantal Freer) and Moteé (actress Kristy Wright).

Stunt doubles Nash Edgerton (left) and Bob Bowles, also a Stunt Rigger, try out a piece of action before some bluescreen on Stage 4.



Photo by Paul Tiller

So this is how the Jedi do it! A table in the Props Department at Fox Studios Australia holds all the necessities for a do-it-yourself lightsaber building kit for the budding Jedi, even a junior Dooku.



Photo by Paul Tiller

Photo by: Michael Horton

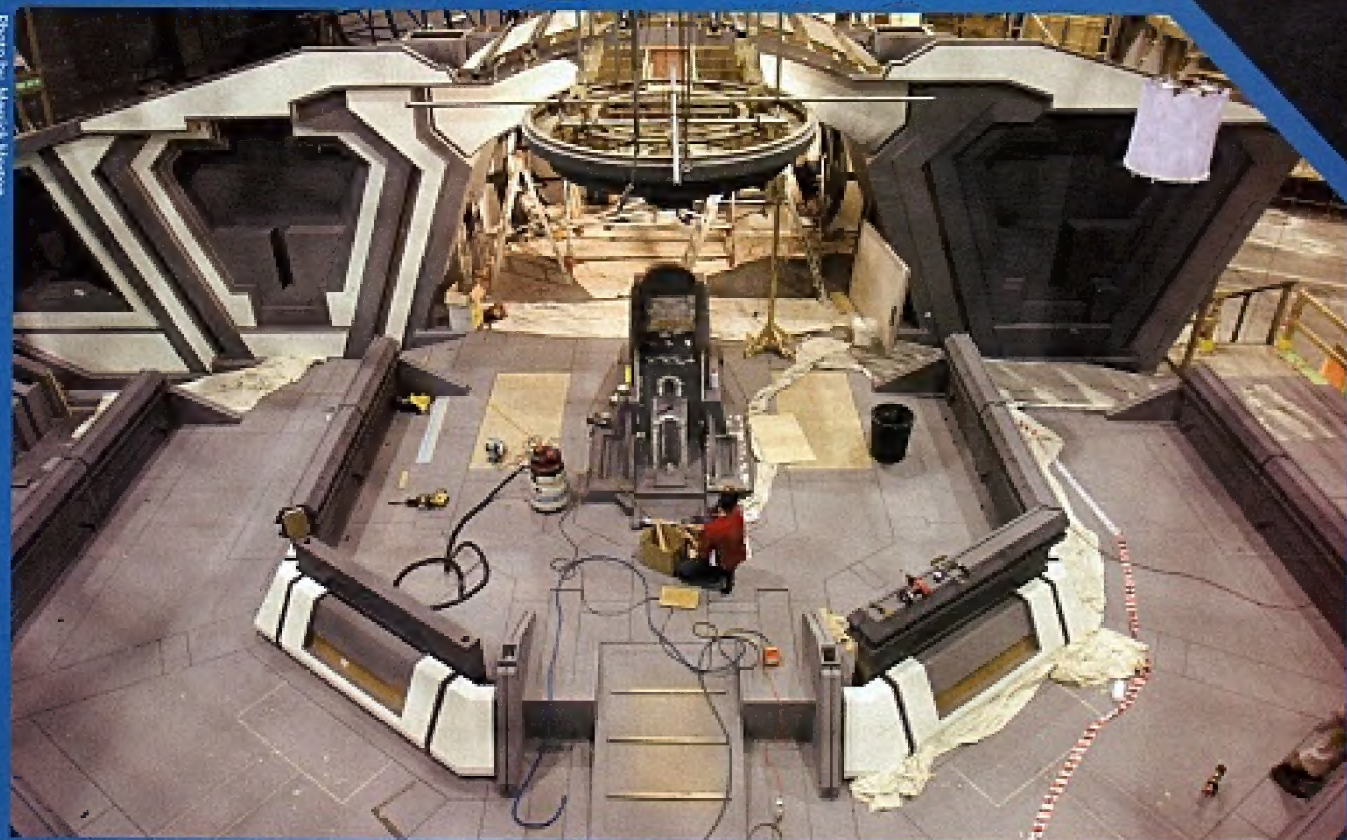


Photo by: Paul Tiller



Seen from the catwalks above Stage 1, the bridge of the Trade Federation Cruiser set begins to take shape, with the navigation chair featuring prominently.

The ever-present clapper board has evolved from the days of chalk and eraser. It marks the start of every shot from every camera to ensure that there is detailed information to aid in the editing of the movie.

Photo by: Paul Tiller



A new vehicle, a transporter for Supreme Chancellor Palpatine, as it underwent construction at Fox Studios Australia. Yes, the ladders were replaced with more comfortable seats.



Anakin Skywalker (actor Hayden Christensen) is suspicious of nearly everyone and everything—but perhaps not suspicious enough—in *Star Wars: Episode III*.

Rank has its privilege! There's probably no charge for Senator Fema Baab (actress Olive Levi) as she gets a new "do" from Hairdresser Pip Lund in the Hair and Make-Up Department.



Who's smiling now? Jedi Kit Fisto, who always seemed to be smiling in Episode II, is less likely to be smiling at the end of Episode III, we fear. He's also being played by a new actor, stuntman Ben Cooke, who gets fitted for his mask in the Hair and Make-Up Department.

STAR

Insider Goes Down Under

» Flying halfway around the world would normally be exciting enough, but for the *Star Wars* Insider staff, this trip to Sydney, Australia, was the journey of a lifetime. The four of us (Lisa Stevens, Vic Wertz, Mary Franklin, and Dave Gross), along with eight other editors from the various worldwide Fan Clubs, went where every fan dreams of going: behind the scenes on the set of Episode III.

Our intrepid guides for this foray were Steve Sansweet, director of fan relations at Lucasfilm, and Lisa Shaunessey, publicity assistant for JAK Productions. They arranged a jam-packed, three-day schedule that had our international group hustling from building to building in a steady stream of interviews interspersed with time on set to see the filmmakers shoot the last *Star Wars* movie.

One of the best parts of this trip was getting to meet our international counterparts from all over the world: Patrice Girod and Pieric Guillonneau from France, Brian Robb from the UK, Jose Arosa and Fernando Vázquez from Spain, Julia Moreno from Mexico, and Junzo Takagi and Akiko Tominaga from Japan. On our first day on the set, Chris Brennan and Peter Roberts from *Star Walking*, the unofficial but long-running *Star Wars* fan club in Australia, also joined us, along with Amy

Somensky, winner of the Hyperspace "Be Pablo Hidalgo for a Day" contest.

Day 1

The night before our set visit, we all crowded into Steve Sansweet's hotel room, and he gave us an overview of Episode III and a preview of the next three days' itinerary. Needless to say, our anticipation for the next day's set visit was palpable.

The filming for Episode III was once more taking place at Fox Studios Australia. Getting onto the lot was a bit like going through airport security with a blaster rifle strapped to your back, but with the wave of a hand and the mention of a certain name, we were allowed to pass.

Our troop was whisked off to interview production designer Gavin Bocquet. His office was filled with blueprints and three-dimensional models of several of the Episode III sets. The models themselves were wonderful, complete with little cutout figures of the characters that would be in each scene. In many cases, these models are all that the actors have to get their bearings inside a sea of blue or greenscreen. For more on Gavin Bocquet's thoughts on production design, look back at *Insider* #69.

After lunch, Stunt Coordinator Nick Gillard met the editors on the set and answered questions. Gillard talked about choreographing the many different lightsaber battles for Episode III, including the epic battle at the end of the movie between Anakin and Obi-Wan. His wry humor made this interview particularly enjoyable. It was during this chat that we came up with a question to ask almost every interview subject: If Hayden and Ewan were to have a lightsaber fight in real life, who would win? (See this issue's "Prequel Update" for the answer.)

Once the crew was back from lunch break, we saw our first action of the trip. As we huddled around the monitors, the crew shot a scene where Anakin displayed his remarkable lightsaber skills. There was a lot of downtime between shots as the cameras were moved around for different angles. The same action was shot multiple times from various angles to give the editor lots of possibilities when cutting together the movie.

Our afternoon interview was with Property Master Ty Teiger. He and his crew are responsible for building all of the props used by the various characters, as well as much of the set dressing. We were set loose upon the prop department, and before you knew it, blasters and various Wookiee weapons were in everybody's hands. The attention to detail in these items was amazing, but nothing could prepare us for the moment that Teiger brought out a metal briefcase full of the "hero" lightsabers. A "hero" item is one used in close-up shots and publicity photos. Before us were the lightsabers for Anakin, Obi-Wan, Mace, Dooku,

Jedi-Con 2004: The Holocron Adventure

From April 9–11, the fourth official German *Star Wars* convention will take place in the Congress Center in Düsseldorf, Germany. Confirmed guests include Producer Rick McCallum (unless production prevents him from attending), actor Billy Dee Williams (Lando Calrissian), actress Amy Allen (Aayla Secura), actor Jay Lagaetaia (Captain Typho), Lucasfilm's Director of Content Management and Fan Relations Steve Sansweet, and author Aaron Allston (*Rebel Stand*). Information on more guests and other new developments will appear as Jedi-Con 2004 unfolds in both German and English text.

From the World of Lucasfilm

EW 72

by Lisa Stevens

Yoda, Vader and a surprise one we had never seen before. To hold these in our hands made us feel like 12-year-olds again.

We finished our first day on the set watching a different lightsaber battle being filmed on the same set where we watched Anakin earlier in the day. The fight was intense, with lots of smoke and sparks. Because of the risk of burns, stunt doubles took over for McGregor and Christensen, but that was the exception rather than the rule, according to Nick Gillard.

Day Two

Day two at Fox Studios was filled to the brim with interviews with heads of the various departments. We started off the morning with Trisha Biggar, the genius behind the beautiful costume designs of the Prequels. Our interview took place in a room full of bolts of cloth and costumes lined up on racks. Beautiful drawings of costumes that were still in progress lined the walls. Biggar gave us insight into the thought process that went behind some of the major costumes for Episode III. Then one of her assistants, Gillian Libbert, took us into a warehouse housing nearly every costume made for the Prequels, as well as a number of costumes that had seen screen time in the original trilogy. Finally, Libbert took us to the costume storage area for Episode III, and we got to marvel at the grace in the design of Padmé's new gowns and inspect the detail on the new costumes for Supreme Chancellor Palpatine and Senator Bail Organa, among others.

After tearing ourselves away from the costumes, we walked up the road to meet Ivo Coveney, the costume props supervisor. His group creates the armor, leatherwork, jewelry, and other accoutrements used in the final costumes. Since work was winding down on

Episode III, there wasn't much to show us. However, one pivotal costume was being finished that day. We'll be able to talk more about that in a future issue.

After another fine lunch, we were ushered into a private room for a one on one with Producer Rick McCallum. The power behind the throne of the Prequels was relaxed as he talked about the filming thus far and his hopes for Episode III in general. Look for more info from McCallum in this issue's "Prequel Update," as well as in future issues.

Our next interview victim was John Knoll, a visual effects supervisor for Episode III. As in all the Prequels, George Lucas' Imagination has been freed to think of stranger and more alien landscapes and buildings than ever before, and Industrial Light & Magic is once more

charged with bringing his vision to life. Knoll's job on set is to make sure that ILM has all of the data it needs to do its job in postproduction. Many have seen pictures of Knoll with what the editors dubbed "the Knoll Sphere," a silver ball with one side shiny, one side dull. Knoll modified the device from one he'd seen another effects supervisor using to give the ILM animators information about the lighting conditions on the set so they could match it with their CGI effects.

The final interview of the day was with Dave Young, special effects supervisor. In this age of CGI, it's surprising how much of a Star Wars movie still contains good old-fashioned special effects. These could be as simple as smoke and sparks (as in the scene described earlier) or as complex as creating a whole water tank for a

Posted

In July, avid poster-collector and Insider contributor Bill Plumb presented items from his personal collection at the Borders bookstore in Roseville, CA. After sharing stories of his correspondence with some of the most celebrated poster artists, he signed copies of Star Wars Insider #60, which included his article, "Poster Perfect."



scene involving some very wet Jedi.

Young even came up with an ingenious gimbal that allows a set to revolve, simulating the motion of a starship in distress.

At the end of the day, the group of editors split up, half of us watching the filming on a very small stage while the rest visited the Hair and Makeup department. An hour later, we switched. The scene that was being filmed that afternoon was part of the epic Anakin and Obi-Wan lightsaber battle and involved mostly greenscreen, with only a sliver of real set under their feet.

Day Three

The final day on the set started off with a bang, when we visited Dave Elsey, creature shop creative supervisor. Imagine walking into the warehouse of a tribe of headhunters, with trophies from a dozen alien species on the shelves: Rodians, Quarren, Ishi Tib, and other familiar faces stared at us from every nook.

Dominating the room, however, was a cadre of Wookiee costumes in one corner. Not only was our old friend Chewbacca there, but so were a number of other fierce Wookiees. We also saw a dummy that had a great likeness of an unconscious Obi-Wan, dubbed Fauxbi-Wan by

the crew. On the other side of the room, two Neimoidian heads serenaded us with the tune "Swanee." The effect was created using a computer program that caused the mouth to move in synch to the dialogue. This physical effect—not digital graphics—is how our Neimoidian friends will talk in front of the camera for Episode III.

Our post-lunch interview subject was none other than George Lucas. Shooting was scheduled to start again soon, so we had only about 40 minutes to ply him with questions. Still, it was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to chat with the creative genius behind the

STAR SIGHTINGS 72

by Benjamin Harper



Who knew the handmaiden would become such a superstar? **KEIRA KNIGHTLEY**



(Sabé) has found fame in the summer blockbuster *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* as well as in the sleeper hit *Bend It Like Beckham*. According to *This Is London*, Knightley is under consideration for a role in the upcoming *Jurassic Park IV*. "It was so amazing because I've been a big fan of the original film for years," Knightley said in a recent interview. "Steven (Spielberg) said he liked my work in *Bend It Like Beckham* and wanted to meet me. I think Sam Neill really pushed for me as well because we had worked together before on *Doctor Zhivago*," last year's television mini-series. Facing velociraptors and pterodactyls isn't the only exciting news for Ms. Knightley. The Internet Movie Database reports that she is working on *Tulp Fever*, a romantic drama for Dreamworks and Miramax with co-star Jude Law. Even more: According to *British Vogue*, Knightley has acquired a big-time advertising contract with Asprey, an upscale jeweler with flagship

stores in London and New York. "We are thrilled to have Keira Knightley as the face of Asprey," said Bianluca Brozzetti, the CEO of A&G Group. "I cannot think of anyone more appropriate to represent us than Keira. Her beauty and style complement the new world of Asprey perfectly."



From Jedi Master to dysfunctional superhero: According to *Box Office*

Prophets, **SAMUEL L. JACKSON** (Mace Windu) has taken a starring voice role in *The Incredibles*, the next animated film from Pixar Studios. The story follows a family of superheroes who reside incognito in the suburbs after being placed in the Witness Protection Program to keep them safe from a particularly vile supervillain. When they're called out of hiding to save the world, all aitch-ee-double-hockey-sticks breaks loose. According to the report, Jackson will play the heroes' arch-nemesis in a cast that includes Holly Hunter, Jason Lee, and Wallace

Shawn. Rumor has it that Jerry Springer will have a cameo as himself, but let's hope that one's wrong. Check out the incredible trailer at www.apple.com/trailers.



Report from Geekland: The Gen Con Game Fair was held in Indianapolis this year, and one of the *Star Wars* guests of honor was **DANIEL LOGAN** (Boba Fett), who reported that he was soon journeying to New Zealand to do last-minute shots for *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. No word on what character he's playing in the final film of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, but by the time you're reading these words, you may have already spotted him in *Hobbit*.

Art genius **DOUG CHIANG** (design director for Episodes I and II) has just published a book with celebrated science-fiction author Orson Scott Card (*Ender's Game*). *Robota* is an illustrated novel with an amnesiac hero exploring an ancient, decay-



ing world in which outnumbered humans battle a horde of robot warriors. The deluxe volume by Chronicle Books features 75 pieces of Chiang's artwork, and it's gorgeous.

Star Wars composer **JOHN WILLIAMS** was celebrated recently at a two-day event at the Hollywood Bowl in Hollywood, California, entitled *John Williams: His Music and More*. The Bowl's website described the late August event by saying, "Movie-music-master John Williams brings his own special brand of magic to the Bowl when he conducts the Philharmonic in his own masterpieces and works he loves." Part of



the program involved a new arrangement of music from all five *Star Wars* movies with narration by none other than the voice of Darth Vader himself—James Earl Jones!

PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) recently held its annual poll to find out just who the Sexiest Vegetarian Alive is, and what famous queen was

Star Wars saga, and all of the editors were thrilled at the opportunity.

Our last interview was with Roger Barton, the editor for Episode III. Barton expressed his happiness at being part of a Star Wars movie and getting to edit with George Lucas. He mentioned that George had told him to "make his own Star Wars movie" from the raw footage, with the understanding that things would more than likely change when George was ready to begin editing. Roger was excited to have the opportunity and said that he felt that the scenes he had edited already were powerfully dramatic, sure to thrill fans.

The day ended with us back on the set to watch some more filming of the climatic lightsaber battle. This time, there was a bit more set to compete with the greenscreen. Between shots, Pablo Hidalgo, web reporter extraordinaire, pointed the webcam at the assembled editors. As we got used to being under the eye of a world full of Star Wars fans, John Knoll decided to direct us in a little webcam feature, where we all rotated in our chairs to his cues, including a little early-Star Trek-style chain-leaning to simulate the ship rocking. George was so amused by our shenanigans that he came over to peer into the camera.

The Waiting Begins

As the day ended, it was with a touch of regret that we left Fox Studios. It had been a wonderful three days, and we all wanted more. Rick McCallum teased us with the tidbit that the next day they were going to film an especially exciting scene, but our time was up.

There is nothing more fun than hanging out with your fellow Star Wars fans. The camaraderie and friendships that resulted will last a lifetime. We are all excited about seeing Episode III in 2005. The only problem will be enduring the wait, but we will be able to share more and more of the details of the trip over the next year in Star Wars Insider. ☺

Got a Hot Lead?

Send it to swinsider@pcna.com. Add the words "Star Wars" and "Got a Hot Lead" to the subject line.

nominated? None other than NATALIE PORTMAN (Senator Padmé Amidala). She won the competition last year but lost top honors to Lauren Bush this time. The male winner this year was Josh Hartnett. Portman may not have won that competition, but according to various sources, she's taking on some hefty roles in the near future.

Reuters reports she may be starring in a film called *The Smoker*. Directed by Betty Thomas (*Il Spy*), the film is about a teacher at an all-girls' school who is pursued by a student who thinks he would make a good husband. Rumor has it that Portman is also being pursued to work with Cameron Crowe in *Sitabesttown* and will begin working on a film called *Closer* with Jude Law at the beginning of 2004. *Closer* will also star Kate Blanchett and Clive Owen and will be directed by Mike Nichols.



about something that's right up his alley: motorcycle racing. The film documents the 2001 and 2002 seasons of MotoGP world championship motorcycle racing events, and focuses on four of the sport's most charismatic stars. According to the Internet Movie Database, the film "is a documentary, but it doesn't feel like one. It has the energy and intensity of a Hollywood action movie with the difference that in *Faster* the action and danger are for real."

HUGH QUARSHIE (Captain Panaka) recently completed a religious drama entitled *Conspiracy of Silence*. Quarshie plays Father Joseph Ennis in the film, which is about a "can of worms" opened in the Irish Catholic Church after controversial incidents involving two of its priests. A local journalist tries to expose a cover-up with the help of one of the priests, who hopes that by helping he'll be able to clear his name.

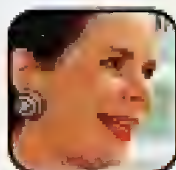


BRIAN BLESSED (Boss Nass) has been cast in the



2004 film *Cabbages & Queens*. Co-starring Keri Russell and Nathan Lane, the film is a comedic romp through jewel heists, the London theater world, and the sleazy underbelly of television documentaries.

Sweetie darling, CELIA IMRIE (Bravo 5) played Edina Monsoon's archenemy



Claudia Bing on the hit series *Absolutely Fabulous*. With season 5 airing in the fall in the UK, we're sure we'll be seeing more of their antics. Last we knew, Claudia had stolen Edina's PR company right out from under her. Imrie has been working hard in the interim, and she has two films coming out soon. *Calendar Girls* is about the women of the Rylstone Women's Institute in North Yorkshire, England, who put out a calendar every year as a fundraiser. The calendar, usually featuring snapshots of local scenery, becomes naughty and attracts worldwide attention when the ladies need to raise a lot of money fast. In *Your Dreams*, scheduled for release in 2004, is about a dentist who is embittered since the girl of his

dreams broke his heart at age 11. When the dentist suffers an accident, he discovers that whatever he dreams comes true, and a whole new life opens up to him.

They're always after his lucky charm! WARWICK DAVIS (Wicket)



reprises the title role in *Leprechaun: Back in Da Hood*, yet another sequel to the cult classic horror flick *Leprechaun*. Emily Woodrow and her friends stumble across a chest of gold coins and, naturally, fail to heed the warnings of a local psychic who warns them of the leprechaun who jealously guards his treasure. Also starring are Sticky Fingaz, Shiek Mahmud-Bey, and Keesha Sharp. In other upcoming projects, Davis plays Oberon, a jazz-club emcee in *Unchain My Heart*, a Ray Charles biopic starring Jamie Foxx and directed by Taylor Hackford; then he puts on a co-producer's hat for *Agent One-Half*, a movie based on an idea he and David Steinberg (Meegosh) conceived while filming *Willow*. ☺



EWAN MCGREGOR (Obi-Wan Kenobi) recently narrated a documentary called *Faster*,



Obi-Wan Kenobi: Michael O'Hanrahan

EWAN MCGREGOR: READY ANYTHING

The Jedi Knight Talks Star Wars, Edgy Characters, and Nude Scenes

By Gabriela Tschanner-Patao

He's played a Jedi and a junkie, a soldier and a singer, a philosopher and a playboy. As an actor, Ewan McGregor is versatile and unpredictable, a star with an edge. "Choosing my roles, I always go by instinct," he says. The director attached to a project or McGregor's potential co-stars do not influence his decision. "I couldn't care less. It's the script or the style of a movie that attracts me. The best director in the world can't make a good movie out of a bad script."

The *Star Wars* movie style must have attracted McGregor since scripts for all the *Star Wars* prequels are guarded like the gold in Fort Knox. Just a couple of weeks before he was heading off to Australia for Episode III, the actor still hadn't seen one line of dialogue. George Lucas told him that the script wasn't finished. "Only when I first had to decide if I wanted to be part of the prequels, I was shown a script. But since I've said yes to *Star Wars*, I have no more choice in the matter. I usually don't see any dialogue or storylines until I get to my first shooting location."

When we met with McGregor he already sported a full beard, and his hair was bleached blond. Despite these preparations, he still had no clue as to what would await his character when filming began. "I hear that me and Hayden will have some big kickoff fight," he jokes. "But until some fan told me about it, I didn't even know Chewbacca was back."

This is the last time McGregor is planning to slip into Obi-Wan Kenobi's robe. In the beginning, it took the actor a while to find his footing in a role that was originally shaped by Sir Alec Guinness. He copied the screen legend's speech patterns and transformed the character from a Padawan in *The Phantom Menace* into the stern teacher and mentor of Anakin Skywalker in *Attack of the Clones*.

Even though McGregor sometimes expressed his frustration with filming in front of a blue screen, the actor is happy to be in the films that ultimately will become classics. "I like when kids approach me and want to know everything about *Star Wars*. I remember when I was that way about the first three myself." Growing up he watched his uncle Denis Lawson playing Luke's wingman Wedge Antilles in the original trilogy. Today, McGregor is

I like when kids approach me and want to know everything about Star Wars. I remember when I was that way about the first three myself."

glad he's leaving a legacy for his kids to watch. "My uncle inspired me to act, and I'm glad I've now made movies to show my kids. A lot of my other films are for a bit more mature audience," he laughs.

Lemonade, No Chaser

During the interview, McGregor seems restless. A pitcher with a pink liquid absorbs his whole concentration. "What is in there?" he asks. Without waiting for an answer, he picks up the pitcher, brings it up to his nose, sniffs, and grins in relief: "It's pink lemonade."

McGregor gave up drinking alcohol after he finished *Attack of the Clones*. "There wasn't a specific incident or moment that caused me to turn my life around after Episode II. I no longer enjoyed the drinking, and yet I found myself doing a lot of it," he says. "It got to a point where I wasn't able to just have a pint of Guinness, it seemed."

"I wanted to be more in control of it, so, it was easier to just cut it out completely. My life since has been a lot cleaner and more manageable." He still drinks lots of caffeine and smokes, even though he promised George Lucas that he'd try to quit smoking until they started shooting Episode III.

Today, McGregor splits his time between work and his family. "That's where I have my happiest moments," he admits. He loves leading the life of a dad, bringing his 7-year-old daughter Clara to school and giving baths to 18-month-old Esther. Whenever he can, he takes his wife Eve Mavrakis, a French production designer he met while working on the TV show *Kavanagh QC*, and his kids to the locations of his current film. They had just recently returned from Alabama where he shot *Big Fish* with Tim Burton and stayed in Los Angeles while he was filming *Down With Love*, the romantic comedy with Rende Zellweger. "We have Clara enrolled in school everywhere," he says. "It requires a bit of organization, but with enough forewarning, it can be done. She adjusts really easily and has made friends wherever we go."

After he finished shooting *Down With Love*, which required McGregor to do a shirtless scene, he had the names of his wife and children tattooed on his right upper arm. "Once they cleared me and assured me that I wouldn't have any more towel scenes or shirt-off scenes, I went straight to the tattoo parlor," he jokes. He is not worried about dealing with the new tattoo in future projects. "These days make-up artists have amazing ways of covering tattoos up."

In the beginning, McGregor approached fatherhood with idealism. "I wanted to be the absolute dad from the get-go, but soon I realized that in the first years of their lives kids need their moms a lot more than they need us. I often felt like an outsider." Since then he has learned a lot about being a father from his first-born. Since the arrival of his second daughter, he considers himself a much better dad.

"The roles my wife and I have taken are almost traditional. If Clara is stepping out of line for example, it's much more effective if I tell her off than if Eve does it. In my family it works better that way." But

Ewan has become a household name as he graces the cover of magazines around the world.





If the roles are split traditionally in the McGregor family, does he do any housework? "Of course not. But neither does my wife!" he adds with a laugh. "Let's make that clear. I have someone come in to do that."

Nude, Not Naked

Ewan McGregor was born in 1971 in Crieff, Scotland. While his brother Colin excelled in school and went on to become a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force, studying wasn't quite Ewan's forte.

When he wanted to leave school to join the Perth Repertory Theatre at the age of 16, his parents supported him.

In 1994, an important collaboration between McGregor, director Danny Boyle, and screenwriter John Hodge began with *Shallow Grave*. Two years later, the trio hit it big with *Trainspotting*, a brutally honest tale of a group of heroin addicts in Scotland. They went on to make *A Life Less Ordinary*. In the year 2000, McGregor was originally up for the lead in *The Beach*, which would have reunited him with his friends, but the role instead went to Leonardo DiCaprio. Recently he turned down the lead in the *Trainspotting* sequel, *Porno*.

Although he's had enormous success with big-budgeted Hollywood productions like *Moulin Rouge!* and *Star Wars*, the actor continues to play edgy roles in independent films like Peter Greenaway's *The Pillow Book* or Todd Haynes' *Velvet Goldmine*: movies in which McGregor has nude scenes. "It amuses me how big a deal is being made about nudity in films," he grins. "Like most people, in real life I'm often naked. Every day and sometimes even several times a day. I thought films should represent real life."

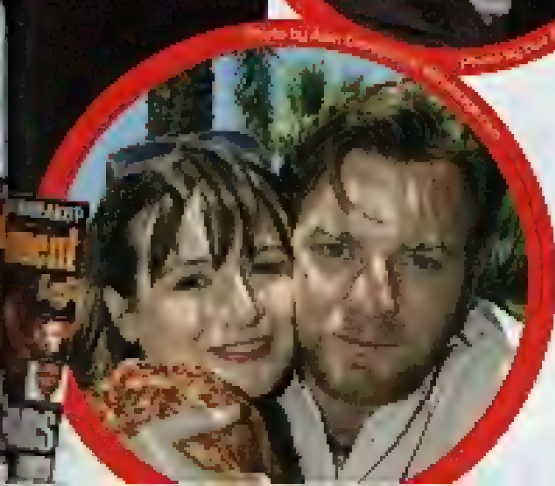
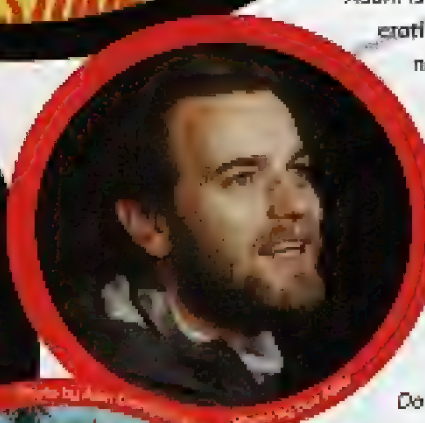
He used to joke about nudity in films as his contribution to the women's movement. After many decades of gratuitous female nude scenes, he wanted to give something back. Today he sees it more as his expression of artistic freedom. "I don't think the nudity in films like *The Pillow Book* or *About Adam* is gratuitous at all. One is a movie about the naked body, and in the other eroticism plays a big part. If nudity in films were a problem for me, I would have never made some of my films. And that would have bound me artistically."

McGregor used to be very vocal about his disdain for the commercialism of Hollywood. Today his view on Tinseltown seems to have mellowed. "I'm less and less aware of what it is," he admits. "What used to anger me about the studio system happens everywhere else, too." He recently got very frustrated when he had a hard time getting funding for *Young Adam*, a small arthouse film with an up-and-coming Scottish filmmaker and several of Britain's finest actors, including Tilda Swinton and Emily Montimer. Then he had a very good experience shooting *Down With Love* in Los Angeles. "I've met some really nice people there. I'd always assumed that it was all just parties and everybody looking over their shoulder. And I'm sure there's a lot of that going on in L.A. But you don't have to be involved in it if you don't choose to be."

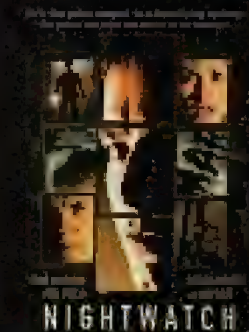
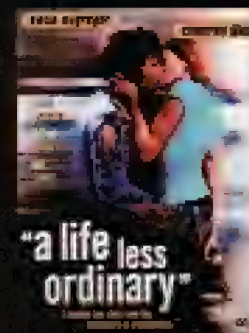
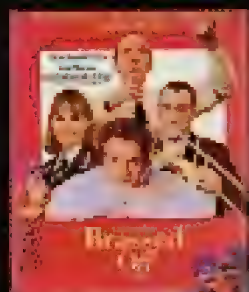
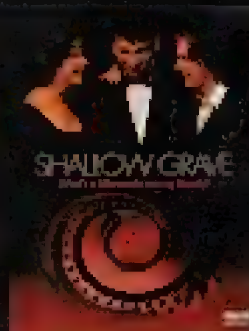
Shaken, Not Stirred

Recently, Ewan McGregor's name has been mentioned as the successor to Pierce Brosnan as James Bond, but the actor is

Clockwise from top right: With Hayden Christensen accepting *Moulin Rouge!*'s first annual Breakthrough of the Year Awards; On the cover of *Empire* Magazine; on the set of *Star Wars: Episode II*; 2003 Cannes Film Festival with wife, Eve Mavrakis; Australian premier of *Down With Love*; on the set of *Star Wars: Episode II*; With Nicole Kidman at the 2002 MTV Music Awards



"Like most people, in real life I'm often naked. Every day and sometimes even several times a day. I thought films should represent real life."



Star Wars are huge movies that are seen all over the world," he marvels. "And still, they haven't changed my life at all."

not sure if he wants to follow up the Star Wars series with another franchise. "Officially, nobody has approached me about Bond," he says. "It reminds me of when I was potentially going to be in Star Wars, not knowing whether it was a good idea. I really questioned all the baggage that would come with it. I was afraid I'd be chased down the street by crazed fanatics." The closer he got to getting the role of Obi-Wan Kenobi, however, the more he wanted to do it. "I've always followed my instincts about such things, so I went for it."

He is relieved that his worst fears haven't been realized. The Star Wars fans he has encountered over the years have been very civilized. "The people are much more interested in it as a film as opposed to who is in it." He actually loves being approached by kids who want to know everything about the experience of being in Star Wars. "It's fantastic the way children ask you how a lightsaber turns on," he smiles. "It's only when adults come up to me and ask where they can apply to be a Jedi that I don't get it. They should really know better."

As the Star Wars series comes to an end, McGregor reminisces about the effect the films had on him and his life. "They are huge movies that are seen all over the world," he marvels. "And still, they haven't changed my life at all." He assumed the series would make him more recognizable as a person and on a professional level, that the films would catapult him up the Hollywood ladder a bit. "That didn't happen at all, which is fine. It hasn't affected my career, either in a negative nor in a positive way."

So, if another blockbuster series like Star Wars or James Bond were offered to him next, would he be ready? "I've always felt ready for anything," he says. "I really have. I wouldn't worry about it until I started working on it. If you have any fears about it, that's usually a good thing. It makes you do better work." 🍌





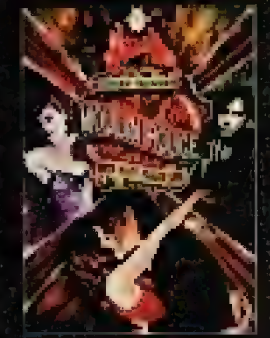
"I've always felt ready for anything. If you have any fears about it, it makes you do better work."

Selected Filmography

- Shallow Grave* (1994)
- Brassed Off* (1996)
- Trainspotting* (1996)
- The Pillow Book* (1996)
- A Life Less Ordinary* (1997)
- Nightwatch* (1998)
- Velvet Goldmine* (1998)
- Star Wars: Episode I
The Phantom Menace* (1999)
- Moulin Rouge!* (2001)
- Black Hawk Down* (2001)
- Star Wars: Episode II
Attack of the Clones* (2002)
- Down With Love* (2003)

Coming Up

- Young Adam* (2003)
- Big Fish* (2003)
- Flora Plum* (2004)
- Star Wars: Episode III* (2005)



HOW TO MAKE A STAR WARS FAN FILM

By Mark Ruschano

"Troops" (1997)



Director's working of Kevin Rubio



We've all been there. You could be traveling to work, walking through the store, going about your everyday routine—when you stop to admire a normal situation that suddenly seems interesting and a thought enters your head: "That would be a great idea for a movie." But what if you were to rephrase that as, "That would be a great idea for a Star Wars Fan Film"? With the Fan Film Awards, you can use Star Wars to tell your story.

THE GIFT OF "LICENSE LIFTING"

For the past two years, Lucasfilm and AtomFilms have joined together to create the Star Wars Fan Film Awards (SWFFA): a forum that allows fans to express themselves through short films. By way of these awards, Lucasfilm is temporarily granting qualifying filmmakers certain rights normally reserved exclusively to Lucasfilm under copyright law. These fan-filmmakers are officially granted a license to use Lucasfilm's copyrighted and trademarked concepts within a piece of work intended for publication. AtomFilms acts as the publisher, making the qualifying films available on atomfilms.com. In creating these awards, Lucasfilm has basically said, "Here, use our concepts to tell your own story!" Not only that, but they've given fans a forum to show off our work... not to mention the chance to compete for cash prizes.

Worth pointing out is what George Lucas has done for other filmmakers who have used his famous saga as a showcase for film production. The first such film to gain popularity was "Hardware Wars," in 1977. It soon became the model to which all Star Wars parodies were compared. Over two decades later, George Lucas was quoted on a British morning show as saying, "Hardware Wars" is my favorite Star Wars parody." Kevin Rubio's famous "TROOPS" (1997) brought back the Star Wars fan film in a big way, and led Rubio to work on more Star Wars projects. We could also recall "George Lucas in Love" (1999), a short by Joe Nussbaum, who, like Lucas, is a graduate of the University of Southern California cinema school.

Kevin Rubio's "TROOPS" triggered a tidal wave of Star Wars fan films and galvanized interest in costume clubs like the Fighting 501st.

It's a parody of both *Star Wars* and *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) featuring a young George Lucas as a USC student struggling to write his senior screenplay.

The first *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards ceremony took place in 2002 as part of *Star Wars Celebration II* in

"Being an independent filmmaker and a devoted *Star Wars* fan, I offer a dual perspective about producing your own film for the *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards."

Indianapolis, Indiana, and it returned this year as part of Comic-Con International in San Diego, California. I participated in both festivals and was lucky enough to be selected as a finalist each year. Last year, it was with my film "A Green Hope," and this year with "Carbonite." Being an independent filmmaker and a devoted *Star Wars* fan my whole life, I offer a dual perspective about producing your own film for the *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards.

FILMMAKER, FAN, OR BOTH?

Before beginning production on a fan film, you should ask yourself why you want to create it. Look at the past finalists of the SWFFA and consider the success of earlier films like "Hardware Wars," and it could lead you to a better understanding of what you desire to achieve.

There are at least three categories of *Star Wars* fan filmmaker:

- Professional filmmakers who want to compete for an award
- Aspiring or amateur filmmakers seeking recognition
- Fans who simply want to have fun in their favorite fantasy world

I fall between categories 1 and 3, so when I sat down to write my scripts, I was trying to create stories that had the potential of receiving an award without compromising my artistic approach to filmmaking. I understood that this opportunity could boost my career, as I thought of films like "George Lucas in Love". At the same time, I had been a devoted *Star Wars* fan since I was able to speak, so I tried to make my fan film experience enjoyable as I expressed my adoration of the saga's legacy.

Winning isn't everything, but it is something to consider when picking your genre. Remember your audience! The fans love spoofs and comedies. So if that's your chosen genre, there's always a chance that an audience award, which is based on Internet voting, may find its way to your mantle. Last year's winner, "Star Wars Gangsta Rap," an animated short written by Chris Crawford, is a

The first known *Star Wars* fan film, "Hardware Wars" was ahead of its time. Many fans are discovering it for the first time now that fan films are celebrated so widely.



Photos courtesy of Michael Weaver Productions

"Hardware Wars" (1977)





Mark Rusciano



great example of how Internet buzz can be created by hip, modern-day humor mixed with *Star Wars* parody.

But if you are looking to take home the George Lucas Selects award, you need to look at it with the perspective that George Lucas is your executive producer. He is putting his stamp of approval on these films, so in a sense they represent an extension of his values.

By attending the 2002 Awards, I gained a better understanding of what the panelists and Mr. Lucas chose to endorse as winners. "Christmas Tauntauns," the 2002 George Lucas Selects Award winner, was an animated short film by Matt Bagshaw with music and lyrics by Ed Johnson. It captured an adolescent's experience, as the audience danced within a young girl's dream of receiving *Star Wars* toys for Christmas. While I don't want to compete with animation because it's simply not my style and it's beyond my capabilities, I did grasp the fact that the film was short and filled with ideals. It was something children and adults could enjoy, which is also a common trait among the *Star Wars* films. It mixed that with a spectacular, independent style of animation—George Lucas described it as a "diamond in the rough"—so I can see why it took home top prize.

Bagshaw's film prompted me to make a list of all the major elements in the actual *Star Wars* movies: family, generations, mentorship, and coming of age themes. Plus, there are strong emotions—like bitterness, fear, anger, and resentment—that constantly place the characters at turning points: should one give into hate and take the easy way out? I'd need to incorporate several of these things into my own film.

With all that in mind, I created my story. Knowing that incorporating personal experiences is always a great writing aid, my goal was to compile a complete and concise film that originated from a personal *Star Wars* experience and exemplified the principles and philosophies that George Lucas' stories address. I wanted to think of ideas that appealed to both younger and older generations, but without sacrificing who I am as an artist and what I intended to produce.

CONCEPTION OF A STORY

Boba Fett needs to go grocery shopping, and he has an argument with the checkout lady over a coupon issue!

Fett walking with a basket full of fruit requesting a price check on aisle seven sounds pretty funny. Just seeing someone dressed in that Mandalorian gear browsing the frozen food section would hold the interest of many fans, but even the simplest concept demands answers to dozens of questions. Should the film take place in space or on some remote planet of the *Star Wars* galaxy? Or maybe your location is here on earth. Does it involve

Top: Rusciano with his cherished hobby. Middle: Rusciano focuses, and he and lead actor Justin Schultz consult on the script. Rusciano Pictures is currently in the middle of shooting its next film "Normal Organized Mess," which is scheduled to be finished in January.

well-known characters? Do you create your own? Maybe your angle is more of a documentary style, or a drama portraying reality brushing against the *Star Wars* experience. The possibilities are endless. Remember that you have a great opportunity to use licensed and trademarked *Star*

"Your thoughts need to be concise, your characters must develop quickly, and, most importantly, you have to keep the audience's interest."

Wars merchandise and concepts, so don't be afraid to maximize this opportunity when writing your story. However, don't let it get completely out of hand. The story's content should always come first, above any visual effects, props, or costumes you're tempted to include.

Someone once told me, "If it ain't on the page, then it ain't on the stage." In other words, you need a good script to make the film work. Yes, there is some magic that can occur when shooting and editing, but it always comes back to the script. In this case, you are writing a short film, so one of the most important challenges is illustrating a complete story in a short amount of time. Your thoughts need to be concise, your characters must develop quickly, and, most importantly, you have to keep the audience's interest. The rules set by AtomFilms are that your piece must be 15 minutes or less, but I highly recommend staying far short of that time limit. The longer a short film runs, the more difficult it becomes to hold the audience's attention, as well as that of the judges. Remember that it's called a "short film" festival! It's an extremely unique way to tell a story. Try to keep the total running time of your short under five minutes.

PRODUCTION THROUGH COMPLETION

Once you have a finished script, it's time to begin pre-production, a process that involves a lot of major decisions. You must decide the form and format for your project.

One thing "Star Wars Gangsta Rap" and "Christmas Tauntauns" share is the art of animation. This particular visual medium, from moderate to upscale animation, will probably always constitute a majority of the entries in this festival. Besides some top-notch animation to compete with, you are also going head-to-head with some of the best independently produced special effects in the SWFFA. And why not? *Star Wars* has always been the forerunner in computer animation and visual effects. So why would we expect anything less than young filmmakers pushing their own technical boundaries to impress

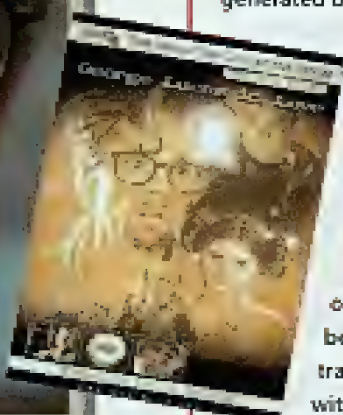
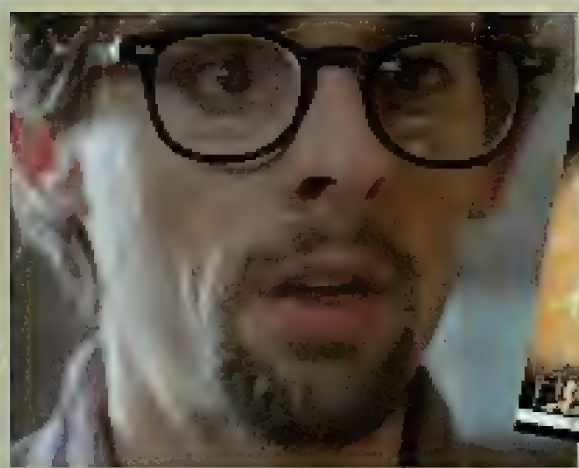


Photo courtesy of Matt Hordern

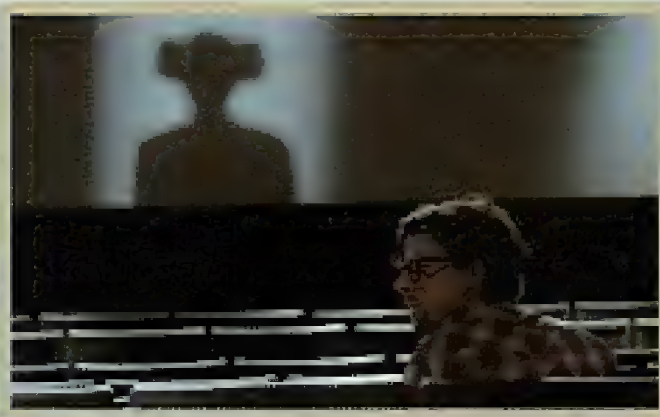
"Carbonite" (2003)



Mark Rusciano and Heather Thomas produced "Carbonite", Rusciano Pictures's 2003 award-winning film, with original music by Crushedleat & Sean Naughton. The short movie tells the tale of Greg Lison (Justin Schultz), a fan seeking revenge but finding redemption.



"George Lucas In Love" (1999)



everyone? From lightsaber effects to serious computer-generated backgrounds and characters, fan-filmmakers pull out all the stops when it comes to paying homage to *Star Wars*. You must ask yourself if this is something you can go up against. Bad special effects or poor animation can create a tacky overall look to your film, so you need to know your limits, and know your genre.

You'll also need to choose whether to shoot on film or video. Both 16 and 35mm film can be very expensive to purchase, develop, and transfer. On the other hand, it can provide you with the edge over other entries, as most choose to shoot on some format of videotape. Last year, I shot "A Green Hope" entirely on black-and-white 16mm. Its format might be the only reason the film made it to the finals, because quite frankly it was a complete rush job. To keep costs down, shoot video or digital video, especially if you plan to mix live action with visual effects. This technique makes compositing more fluid. You can also mix the two, with parts on video and parts on film, maybe to add a different perspective to a certain scene or shot. Either way, the final product will need to be on videotape as per AtomFilms' requirement.

Putting together a crew consisting of people who are both *Star Wars* fans and skilled filmmakers can benefit the overall production. Actors are especially important, because you probably need them to establish reality in what might be a surreal environment in your story. Having all those involved with your film understand and adore the *Star Wars* saga that inspired the film can result in a really creative shoot.

I shot, developed, and edited "A Green Hope" in only four days, which brings up an interesting point: schedule your production wisely. If you can avoid it, start your production as far in advance of the deadline as possible. Murphy's Law ("anything that can go wrong, will") has a tendency to drop by often on film shoots. Also, you need time to make adjustments to your story during both shooting and editing, as things inevitably fall to work according to plan. For example, I had to re-shoot a whole day's worth of footage with one of my child actors when the original tape was accidentally destroyed. We rescheduled, but Murphy's Law paid us a visit, and the 10-year old had to have an emergency appendectomy the morning of the shoot.

When it's time for post-production, the editing process should make every scene flow, creating a totally smooth look to your production. If you need some help, pick a favorite film of yours (maybe *Star Wars*?) and watch each scene and transition closely to admire the film's editing

One of the most famous fan films suggests unlikely sources of inspiration for the Ewok spider-like chase, Princess Leia's singular outfit, and diminutive Master Yoda.

techniques and how they help generate a complete picture. For the truly dedicated, there's no end to the books you can buy (or borrow from the local library) on the craft of editing.

"Compile a complete and concise film that originates from a personal *Star Wars* experience and exemplifies the principles and philosophies George Lucas' stories address."

When you're finished, hopefully your film is as close to your original vision as possible. There are always going to be things you would like to have done differently, but take pride in what you've accomplished.

THE COMPLETION OF YOUR OPUS

The final step is checking all the legal aspects of your work. You'll need to start by checking the rules and regulations section on the AtomFilms website as soon as next year's Awards are announced. AtomFilms will provide an initial submission contract, and if you're lucky enough to be selected as a finalist, then you'll have even more documents to fill out. Actors and original music composers are required to sign clearance and licensing forms, and filmmakers are required to register their finished films with the **Register of Copyrights**. None of these things is particularly difficult to do, and smart filmmakers should probably be doing them anyway. AtomFilms will provide only a short amount of time to complete all of the proper paperwork following notification of acceptance of your film into the finals, so get your **Talent Clearance Forms**, **Music License Agreements** and **Music Cue Sheets** signed and ready when your film is completed. You must also submit a **Form PA** (performing arts) application with the **Register of Copyrights**.

With all that done, it's time to enjoy the results. Let all involved share the pride of what has been accomplished. Make plenty of copies of your film, and distribute them to your talent, crew, and friends. Hold a private screening party for everyone! All of this generates a positive buzz and can only help your chances of success.

Appreciate the fact that whether you are a filmmaker, fan or both, you've put yourself in a position to possibly have a cinematic icon like George Lucas view your work. That alone, at least for me, is enough reason to venture down this path toward the *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards. 🍌

Mark Rusciano wrote this article before the Star Wars Fan Film Awards, where he took home the Skywalker Sound Award, which included a cash prize and a day's use of the facilities at Skywalker Sound.

Glossary

Copyright and trademark laws: Documents such as books, music and film are protected by copyright laws, and concepts like designs and character names are protected by trademark laws. It is generally illegal to use a copyrighted or trademarked work without contractual consent from the holder of that copyright or trademark. What this means for prospective *Star Wars* fan filmmakers is that unless you have a very thorough understanding of the legal definition and practical limitations of the term "Fair Use," the *Star Wars* Fan Film awards provide a very rare opportunity to play in a galaxy far, far away.

Talent Clearance Form: This is a contract between the producer and an actor (either union or non-union). By signing it, the actor (or in the case of a minor, the actor's legal guardian) grants the producer the right to use the actor's appearance in the film, and to use the actor's likeness, image, voice, biography, photographs and performance for all facets of the film's production and promotion.

Music License agreements: Both Master and Synchronization License forms are contracts between a music composer and the movie producer. They grant the producer non-exclusive rights to record, use, and synchronize the composers' music in the film and throughout the promotional process. (In this context, "synchronizing" isn't an editing term—it just means using the music to accompany any visual element.)

Register of Copyrights: A division of the U.S. Copyright office. It is here where you apply to copyright your published or unpublished work.

Compositing: A technique where one shot is superimposed on another. It is one of the most important and widely used effects techniques.

Music Cue Sheet: A chronological listing of all of the pieces of music (or "cues") used in a film, including the individual durations of each cue.

Form PA: The form PA ("performing arts") is for the registration of a published or unpublished script or treatment, among other things. It is available through the Register of Copyrights at the U.S. Copyright Office and can be downloaded at www.copyright.gov. In addition to the form, you must pay a small fee (currently \$30) and submit a synopsis and a copy of your work.



THE NEED FOR SPEED

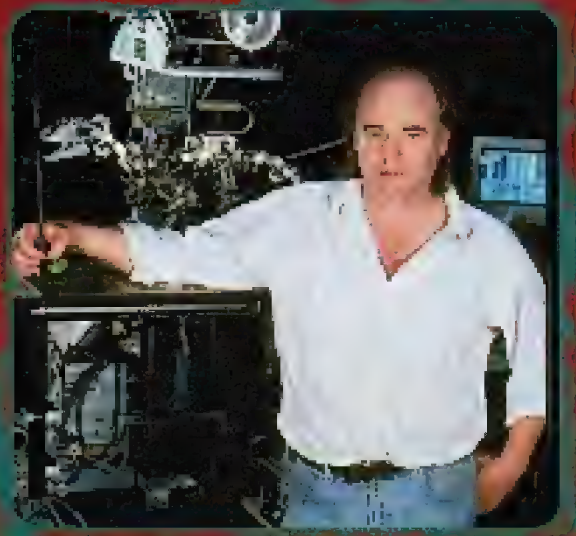
Behind the Endor Chase Scene in Return of the Jedi

By Ron Magid

Return of the Jedi is undeniably one of the grand spectacles of the pre-digital age, when visual effects were created not on a computer but by building up photographic elements to create a shot. Much has been made of Jedi's climactic space battle with dozens of ships buzzing over the Death Star, a sequence that demanded 20-mile mastery to composite every ship on a single strip of film that was rewound again and again in an optical printer. Other memorable sequences include the *Millennium Falcon* flying through the Death Star with fire chasing it, the walkers in the woods battle, and probably Jedi's most exhilarating passage, the speeder bike chase. At 500 effects shots, Jedi was the most elaborate visual effects film of all time—and arguably remains so to this day. Saw's visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund, "I think that Jedi is certainly the most complicated photochemical movie ever done."



And the Oscar goes to (clockwise from top left) Dennis Muren, Richard Edlund, and Phil Tippett—three Academy Award-winning visual effects supervisors from ILM.



TIME HAWK

The ILM effects crew was headed by Edlund and co-visual effects supervisors Dennis Muren, Ken Ralston, and Phil Tippett, all of whom took home Oscars for their roles in creating a stunning aria of effects.

"By then everyone was really cookin'," Muren says. "Ken Ralston and Richard Edlund did most of the spaceship stuff, I did most of the land-based stuff, and Bruce Nicholson did all the optical stuff. By that time, we'd figured out practically everything, so whenever there were any stumbling blocks, we found new ways to go. We were really geared up for that show, and I think it shows in the quality of the work."

But the huge project was much more of a grind than the Academy members—or audiences—ever suspected. "Jedi" was an incredible task, and it happened very

quickly," recalls Edlund, who also won Academy Awards for his contributions to *Star Wars* and *Empire*. "We had much less time than you would think. We had over two years to work on *Star Wars*. We had about two years on *Empire* also, but *Jedi* was about a year! Once we finished *Empire*, we spent about ten months on *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, then I went directly from that into *Palmergeist*, and Dennis was working on *E.T.* We had built this incredible assembly line, and that's the secret of ILM's success. Whenever you have a big facility like that, there's this trend: you can really crank stuff out, and one thing leads to another. That's what it all boils down to."

Such automation, however, does have its drawbacks. Consider this: there's no way to slow that assembly line down when certain sequences take longer to figure out than expected—as was the case with the speeder bike chase. The sequence was handed to the up-and-coming Dennis Muren, who received the first of his eight Academy Awards for *Empire*, but who only made the leap to Visual Effects Supervisor on 1981's *Dragonslayer*, followed by *E.T.*, which garnered him another Oscar before he was indentured to *Jedi*. As was his wont, Muren began "needling" ideas for how to pull the fast-paced sequence off with his colleagues. "We were worried about how we were going to shoot the backgrounds for that," Edlund says. "There was talk about flying the camera on long cables through the forest, but then how do you get rid of the cables?"

That was light years before digital technology would've solved the problem in nanoseconds. In those

"I really approached that sequence like a documentary, and when we put it together, you can tell it's right."

days, wires and cables were major hurdles to be avoided if at all possible, but with the clock ticking, there was only so much noodling Muren could afford. "The problem with these shows is those of us who are actually making these movies have got a deadline," observes Muren, one of the great realists of his profession. "It's one thing to sit around and say, 'Boy, it would be really neat to do something [like this or that],' but the other side of it was that this movie had to be out in theaters in so many months and it couldn't have 'scene missing' shots! That's serious, but nobody really understands it until they're actually in that position."

In the nick of time, Edlund hit on an elegant solution to shooting the high-velocity background plates for the speeder bike chase: "I thought, 'Well, this'll be really fast to do: why don't we shoot SteadiCam at one frame a second, and try that?' And that's what we did, and that's what ultimately ended up working."

The SteadiCam was the brainchild of cinematographer Garrett Brown—it's a counterbalanced, handheld rig that creates smooth, gliding movements without the use of dolly tracks. Edlund realized it would be perfect for creating the illusion of flying through the forest, whipping through trees and dodging limbs with last-second derring-do. "Dennis and Garrett Brown shot the back-

Top: Chris Rand, Technical Assistant at ILM's machine shop, shows off the Go-Motion rig as it manipulates a speeder bike model with Luke and Leia maquettes attached. Center: Ralph McQuarrie's preproduction art conveys a strong sense of motion. Bottom: A closeup of the speeder bike model with Luke.



ground, following a string on the ground as a pattern," Edlund chuckles. "Later, if the camera moved off 'the string' for one frame, we could optically adjust that frame. We ended up going through all that footage, fixing and Vaseline-ing it . . . And it all worked pretty damn good!"

NOT-SO-EASY RIDER

So much for the backgrounds. There was still the issue of how to believably incorporate Luke and Leia, not to mention several speeder bike pilots and their flying "Harleys," into the super-fast background plates. Muren consulted with his old chum, stop-motion animation whiz Phil Tippett, and they agreed that Go-Motion puppet animation—a process they pioneered on *Empire*, then expanded on *Dragonlayer* and *E.T.*—might just be the answer.

Go-Motion was virtually the only refinement to stop-motion since its invention around the dawn of cinema. Stop-motion animation was responsible for breathing life into 1933's *King Kong*, with effects by Willis O'Brien, and later enlivened the masterpieces of his protegee, Ray Harryhausen, whose films include *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*, and *Jason and the Argonauts*. Go-Motion, developed by

"Everybody poured it on in order to create something that was heretofore never seen and maybe never would be again."

Muren and Tippett, employed stop-motion puppets with certain motorized joints that moved just slightly as the camera shot a single frame of film. In the finished shot, those axes of movement gave the illusion of motion blur, rather than the strobing, mime-like look of some stop-motion. Muren and Tippett first tried their new process on the Rebels' snowbeasts, the tauntauns, to distinguish their lifelike gallop from the mechanical stride of the snow walkers. "Phil Tippett and I had been talking about motorizing something or other because we had all this gear here that we might as well use," Muren recalls. "We managed to get two motions out of our Go-Motion rig—a side view and coming toward camera. Phil did all the programming, which took forever—one or two weeks to program each shot—but looked really good. It didn't solve everything, but it made those shots a little bit better."

For most of the shots, Luke, Leia and the speeder bike pilots were 1/6-scale puppets shot against bluescreen with rods protruding out their backs and heads. "The motion-control speeder bikes were not shot at slow speed, with traditional Go-Mo like we did [with] the kids on the bikes in *E.T.* Instead, somebody, usually Mike McAllister, let the camera run as he very slowly pulled the rods and moved the head or body of the puppet, so it was really fast to shoot those things."



The speeder bike chase remains an amazing piece of film, the ultimate expression of George Lucas' concept that transformed *Star Wars*' space battles, where the spaceships were in sharp focus against an incredibly blurred background. Muren says that the extensive animatics he created enabled him and his cohorts to visualize and adrenalize the incredibly exciting sequence. "They sure did," Muren agrees, "just like in *Star Wars*. By doing the animatics first, we were able to break the sequence apart, then shoot the footage, and it came out just about the same. I tried not to think about it too much, because then you start shooting custom speeds for side views and back views and you end up hurting it. Taking it an element at a time like that, everyone likes to tweak it, make each shot a little faster or a little slower, and then it wouldn't have been as effective when it was all cut together. I really approached that sequence like a documentary and shot it the way it would've really been, and when we put it together, you can tell it's right."

While Muren has continued his involvement with the *Star Wars* universe, co-writing as well as supervising effects for the Disney ride/film attraction *Star Tours* and for Episodes I and II, Edlund chose to open his own effects facility, Boss Film, which created effects for *Ghostbusters*, *Big Trouble in Little China*, and *Air Force One*. "Jedi was really tough, and it wasn't so much fun," Edlund explains. "The whole gestalt of ILM was changing, and I decided that I had signed on to finish the trilogy, and at the end of it, I wanted to move on. But everybody poured it on in order to create something that was heretofore never seen and maybe never would be again. Jedi was our *pièce de résistance*." 🍷



Left: Patrick Sweeney, Assistant Cameraman at ILM, checks the lighting on the bike scout. Changes in lighting between frames could spoil the illusion of reality.

Top: The Clone Who Wasn't There—This bike scout is convincingly composited onto the location.

Center: One of the keys to believable motion is an appropriate amount of blur on both the subject and the background.

Bottom: The full-size speeder bike model doesn't move quite as fast as the bikes in the film.



Designed Simplicity

Trisha Biggar on "evolving down" the new Star Wars costume designs

by Francis K. Lalumière

The conversation is about strange planets, imaginary creatures, and virtual landscapes. With her lilting Scottish accent—and being a few thousand miles removed in faraway Australia—

Costume Designer Trisha Biggar is really speaking from another world; she might as well be sitting on Naboo. But this is no vacation.

"We have the work crews started," Biggar reports. "We started a little earlier this time, and we're doing the whole thing in Australia, rather than working for some time in London and then coming to work over here."

Trisha Biggar has her work cut out for her. For Episode I, she had to reinvent *Star Wars* costumes while keeping the design true to the saga's spirit; for Episode II, Biggar needed to take her costumes to

the next step, following a few key characters as they grew into adults, both physically and psychologically.

But there was a catch.

While the costumes had to parallel their wearers' transformation, they also had to evolve in reverse, moving toward a fictional era created almost 30 years ago. For at the end of Episode III, everything—including costumes—needs to come close to the point at which everything starts. That's where the loose strands connect to the dangling beginnings of Episode IV, the chapter of the saga that was actually the first produced. In this paradoxical environment, Trisha Biggar has thrived.





"Actors can and should be inspired by what they're wearing."

—Trisha Biggar

The Clothes Make the Young Man

The first order of business for Episode III was to bring young Skywalker and his girlfriend up to speed. "When we saw Anakin in Episode I," Biggar says, "he was still a boy. His clothes at that point were the clothes from his home planet, Tatooine. When we see him again in Episode II, he's on the brink of becoming a Jedi. He's still a Padawan learner, but he is wearing Jedi-type clothing. It's a big transformation from how we saw him ten years ago." But Biggar—in true Jedi fashion—was mindful of the future. "George wanted there to be a hint of what was to come," she says. "All the Jedi wear shades of brown, or neutral beige and brown." Biggar marks a pause to point out that no two Jedi outfits are the same,

Later, the classic Jedi robes that Anakin wears become progressively more ornate. Biggar, whose *Moby-Dick* costume made her an *Star Wars* costume designer, says she was inspired by the character of Gandalf the White from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.





(Clockwise from top left) Padmé Amidala in her elegant gown; Anakin Skywalker in his dark Jedi robes; and Padmé Amidala in her elegant gown, looking at Anakin Skywalker in his dark Jedi robes.



even during the big *mêlée* at the end of Episode II, and then she goes on. "The colors we selected for Anakin were at the darker end of that range. So he was in darker browns, really rich, deep browns." Obi-Wan's costume, by comparison, is a lot lighter, with many beige pieces and ivory outlines. "The aim with Anakin," Biggar continues, "was that in poor lighting you could almost see him wearing black. And that was obviously to reflect the early part of his trip from the light side to the dark side of the Force."

Biggar didn't stop at color schemes, however. To really dig into Anakin's future, she brought in different textures. "We also wanted to reflect some of the qualities of Darth Vader's costume," she says. "He's one of the only Jedi to wear leather. All the Jedi have tabs hanging from the front of their tunics, in a variety of fabrics, but Anakin's were leather." This distinction didn't quite make the Jedi-in-training unique, since a few of his colleagues sported pieces of the same material. "But again, the darkness of his leather tabs," says Biggar, "was a hint of the shiny [armor] Vader wears. It lets us know where Anakin's going to end up. Maybe as a subconscious suggestion."

Some costumes stayed the same, however, and Biggar could afford that because she had done her homework for Episode I and aimed her designs in the right direction. "Obi-Wan is wearing the same outfit in Episode I and in Episode II," says Biggar. "That was originally based on the Obi-Wan outfit from *A New Hope*. It's just a more useful version of that." Biggar and her team had looked at the way Obi-Wan wore his clothes in Episode IV and backtracked from there, trying to reverse-design what the pieces of clothing must have looked like when they were first handed over to Obi-Wan during his training. To get it just right, they even took some aspects of the character's psychology into account. "We tried to think of what Obi-Wan, as a young man, would wear, and how he would wear it," says Biggar. "We also took that up a bit so it would be more suited to action, with the young Obi-Wan leaping around and fighting. Because by the time he reaches Episode IV, he's obviously in full-length robe and under-robe."



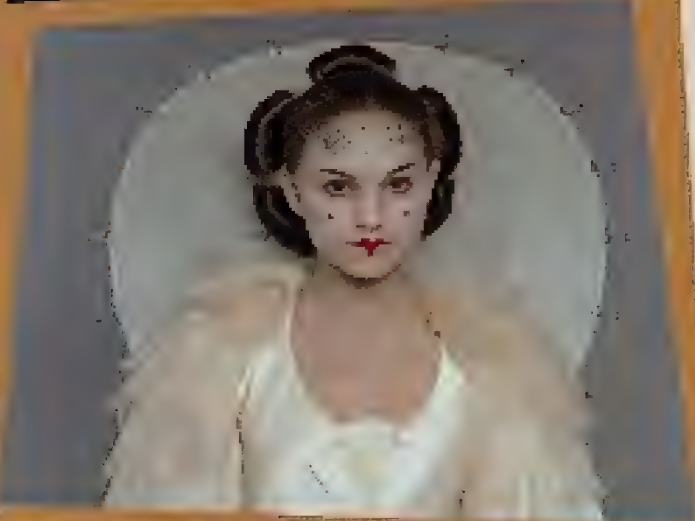
Patterns and Palettes

Color was a critical issue, as is often the case in *Star Wars*—where most of the environments and creatures are instantly recognizable because of their unique palettes. “We tried to match the colors exactly,” Biggar says. “I actually had the original Alec Guinness costume to refer to, and we made sure our version in Episode I (and then Episode II) would have the same color, the same texture.” But again, the costume-design team had to lead the new movie trilogy forward while constantly looking behind them. The colors and textures were not exactly the same because Biggar was trying to simulate, through the visual and tactile language of cloth, the passage of time. “He’s been wearing that cloak since Episode I,” Biggar says. “In theory, obviously. But the idea was always that it was the same cloak we were seeing him wear in Episodes I and II, not a different set of clothes [that all looked alike]. He’s kept it and maintained it, and he’s always worn it.” In essence, Biggar had to de-age Obi-Wan’s costume, give the fabric the body it must have had in its early life, and get rid of tired patches and other repairs—or their Tatooine equivalents. “I don’t know how they mend their clothes there,” Biggar says.

In the case of the star-faring queen and diplomat Padmé Amidala, Biggar’s work was not any easier. The young woman, much like Natalie Portman in real life, had grown from teenager to adult in the time between Episodes I and II. Part of what Biggar set out to achieve was to accentuate the young actress’s real-life three-year evolution and transfer it to the character’s on-screen 10-year span. “There is an obvious difference of figures between girls and women,” Biggar says, “and naturally, by accentuating the womanly shapes—the waist and the hips—costumes can create the illusion that more time has passed [than has happened in reality].” As far as showing that the lead female character had grown older, Mother Nature had already done some of the work for Biggar. “Three years at that age [from 16 to 19] make a big difference in the shapes,” Biggar says. “We only needed to accentuate that difference and show her more like a woman. We saw much more of the waist and shoulders, for instance.”

Biggar picks the black corset-type top Amidala wears by the fire in her home on Naboo as an example of what her team was aiming for. “With George [Lucas] and the concept art department,” Biggar says, “there was a feeling that we should see her much more as a person; a person with different aspects to her life.” Whereas Amidala has been portrayed in Episode I as a very official community leader, a stern figurehead, here the queen was lowering her guard. “That particular outfit was for a scene where she was on her home planet,” Biggar continues, “in a place where she felt very comfortable, a safe place, having dinner with an old friend. At the





beginning of the scene she has a sort of cape on, which does allow the top of her shoulders to be seen, but it's more demure."

As the evening progresses, the young woman gets increasingly comfortable and intimate with Anakin; the cape goes away to leave Amidala in her black corset top, with a tight, narrow waist and bare shoulders. "It wasn't meant to look in any way like underwear," Biggar says. "It was meant to be a very fitted strapless top with the black leather matching the black sleeves that are almost like opera gloves. So there was still a hint of formality about it, but it was much more revealing than anything we'd seen in the past, I suppose. Also, she was in a situation where she was falling in love with Anakin, even if she wasn't acknowledging it at that point."

Apart from the age difference, another important change in the life of the maturing Amidala would have a significant impact on the way she dressed; she went from Queen to Senator. "Between Episodes I and II," says Biggar, "her role is relaxed from being a very formal character that reflected her position in society, to a situation where she still had an important position in public life, but was also able to have a more private side to her character." As a result, all of Padmé's clothes—even the ones not designed to enhance her emerging womanhood—evoked a casualness rarely associated with the character in the previous film. "Even the clothes for meetings with Palpatine were not as rigid or as formal as the costumes in Episode I," says Biggar. "They had a formality to them, a certain ceremonial quality, but not on the same level that we had in Episode I. Everything was more personal."

Growing Out of Your Old Clothes

Before moving on from Amidala's wardrobe, Biggar highlights one final, important change that helped anchor the impression that the character had aged ten years. "A young woman sees herself differently from a teenager," she says. "There is a difference, I think, in their confidence in themselves." Amidala was ten years



older in *Attack of the Clones*, and that fact alone was bound to generate and justify certain on-screen departures from the Queen's behavior in *The Phantom Menace*. Add to that the fact that the actress had aged three years, crossing an important threshold in any young adult's life, and it's no wonder Senator Amidala seemed to move and compose herself differently, which, in Biggar's universe, translated into a new way for the character to wear her clothes.

"I think you have to allow the actors to be comfortable in their costumes," says Biggar, "and I think it's one of the first things actors should not be aware of: what they're wearing." So that particular aspect of the costumes' evolution, as it finally appears on the screen, was the result of a psychological process and not a creative one on the part of Biggar. Actually, it emerged from a conscious decision not to influence the actors with the costumes. "Actors can and should be inspired by what they're wearing," she says, but she emphasizes that the costumes should never direct their wearers.

"The actors shouldn't be inhibited by the costumes," Biggar says. "Obviously, in Episode I, that was a much more difficult thing [to achieve]." Who's forgotten the massive headpieces Amidala had to wear? "In Episode II the costumes were much easier to move around and be natural in; they were on a much smaller scale. I think it's important to avoid [situations] where you have to do special things." On Episode I even the handmaidens had to endure their own personal form of costume dictatorship. "For some of their costumes, we had to develop a special seat for them to sit on," remembers Biggar. "They couldn't sit down properly, so we had little seats that fitted inside their costumes which they could sit on."

Then again, this relative lack of clothing extravagance didn't make it any easier on Biggar and her team. While

Left: Queen Amidala's headpieces are very elaborate and ornamental, conveying authority. Below Right: Padmé Amidala's wedding gown was designed simply to reflect the classic gowns worn by Leia in the films. Middle Right: Conceptual designer Padmé Amidala's wedding gown. Illustrated by Gernot Pauer.



the character evolved toward adulthood, the costumes were paradoxically moving toward a past that had simpler design lines. Remember Leia's white Senatorial robe from *A New Hope*? "The idea of [Padmé's costume] was a very, very simple wedding dress," Biggar recalls. "Great simplicity, and it took quite a long time to get to that point. We gave it a pre-Raphaelite feel; we had to make some lace pieces to go along with a very old piece of lace I found in Australia..." Biggar takes in a slow breath, "It looks like a very simple dress, but it ended up being probably one of the most complicated dresses. It just took a lot of time to think about the simple aspects of it."

Dressed To Kill

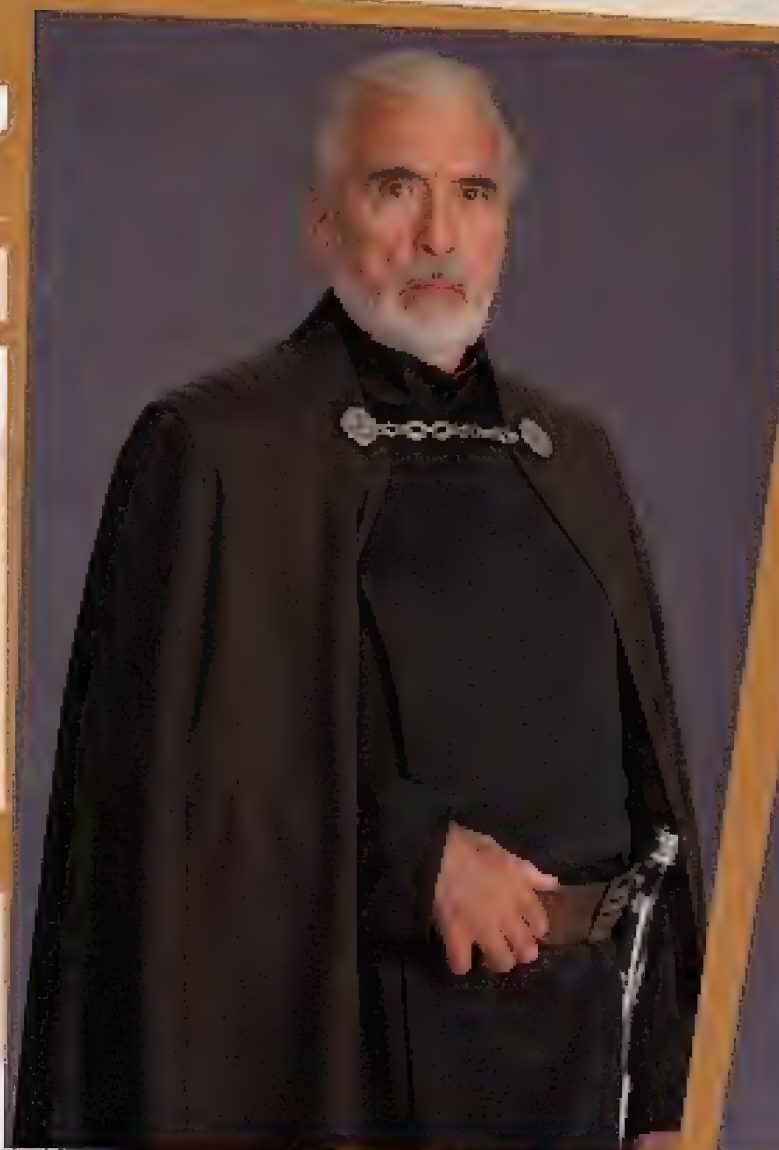
If we turn away from the light and embrace the dark side, we find that even the bad guys had their costumes evolve backward, using that paradox to grow into what will eventually connect with the real-life past, the later episodes of the saga. "The costume for Count Dooku was a very dark brown," Biggar says, "and it had a sort of formality about it. A little hint of the Imperial army in the future... although that wasn't initially a thought. It occurred to me later on, that there was a link on that level." Which goes to show that once a

concept and a direction are firmly rooted in a design, some of the work is done subconsciously.

One influence on Dooku's outfit that Biggar wanted to explore from the get-go was that of the Jedi Order. "He had been a Jedi," she points out, "so the colors we used for his costume reflected that." Thus, the Count wore brown—dark, naturally—but also a distinctive look, very classy; something you might wear to the opera. "This reinforced the idea that, although Dooku had fought alongside Jedi once, he had left that aspect of his life behind him," Biggar says. "Still, there are other Jedi who have a slightly more tailored look than, say, Obi-Wan. There's one or two of them. Not as sophisticated as Dooku, though." The Count is truly one of a kind.

One of a kind or not, even the powerful Count Dooku had to obey the force that pushed costume design forward—or backward, from a certain point of view—to meet up with Episode IV and complete the circle. Technical aspects also follow that conceptual drive: not only are Amidala's clothes getting simpler, while the handmaidens can all sit down in costume—to cite only two examples—but stunt costumes are now designed with refined techniques that make them... well, simpler. "In Episode I, we had the Naboo military wearing costumes [with very rigid pieces]," Biggar says. "We made stunt varia-

tions of all that armor so that stuntmen could fight comfortably without being injured. We used injected foam for the pieces to keep their shapes and then added paint-on leather coverings to create the illusion that those were the original costumes, and not copies." That procedure was not



necessary for any of the costumes in Episode III, though some pieces of clothing looked anything but cushiony. Even so, nobody needed a special version of their costume; not even Jango Fett, one of the most action-oriented characters in the whole movie. "There were rigid pieces in there," says Biggar, "but naturally we would go to the stunt coordinator [Nick Gillard] and discuss any aspects that we thought would need to get looked at. So nothing could hurt the actor. His costume was quite stunt-friendly, really."

And where is this going in Episode III? It's still too early to reveal details, in part because Biggar had yet to finish some of the key costumes as of this writing. "We are working full-time on the designs, and they are taking form, but the challenges for this movie have not popped up yet. I don't know how it is for the other departments, but in our case we tend to meet most of our challenges closer to the time when we start filming."

One significant costume transition should be no surprise to fans of the saga: Anakin Skywalker will be hurtling toward his destiny: the black-armored Darth Vader. The Jedi is not a Sith Lord yet, but he's on his way. "We make him much darker this time," explains Biggar. "He was quite dark already, but we've completely made him sort of vague, dark brown; it almost ends up black-brown so that when we see him in black, everyone had been led there." That's as much as Biggar can say—for now—about the man who will be Vader.

In the end, characters will have grown up to be close to the point where they were introduced to the public back in 1977—there will be an 18-year storyline gap between Episodes III and IV. Their costumes, like everything else in the *Star Wars* prequels, will have evolved in the same way. But any simplicity will be hard earned. "As is almost always the case," Biggar says, "the simple things are often the most difficult. It's hard to explain; there are just so many versions of 'simple.'"



With the release of *Star Wars: Episode III - The Revenge of the Sith*, the franchise's 30th anniversary, the costume department is looking back at the original *Star Wars* and the costumes that made it a success. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed.

The Little Thing

The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed.

Does the use of these costumes affect the way you feel about the movie? Yes, it does. The costumes were designed to be simple, but they were also very detailed.

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THE 2003 FAN

THE FILMMAKING FINALE

THE OFFICIAL

STAR WARS

FAN FILM AWARDS
STARWARS.ATOMFILMS.COM

To view all of the Star Wars fan films, set your ray computer to starwars.atomfilms.com. Tell us which are your favorites by sending a postcard or email to "Rebel Rumbblings."

2003 Fan Film Awards Winners

George Lucas Selects Award
"Pink Five"
(Dir: Trey Stokes)

Skywalker Sound Award
"Carbonite"
(Dir: Mark Rusciano)

2003 Audience Choice Award
"The Jedi Hunter"
(Dir: John E. Hudgens)

Spirit of Fandom Award
"Silent But Deadly 2"
(Dir: Jeff Gioletti & Lou Tambone)

Best Commercial Parody
"Dark Side Switch Campaign"
(Dir: Daniel Johnson)

Best Animation Award
"Trooper Clerks"
(Dir: Jeff Allen)

Pioneer Award
"Hardware Wars"
(Dir: Ernie Fosselius)

Ernie Fosselius got it started with "Hardware Wars," and then Kevin Rubio made it big with "TROOPS." By the late 1990s, dozens of fans were uploading their own Star Wars fan films, but they did so with a lingering fear that one day they would know how the Tantive IV felt when the Star Destroyer carrying Lucasfilm's lawyers caught up with them.

"[Many films] were preceded by a screen that said something like, 'Please don't sue me, Mr. Lucas,'" laughs Scott Roesch, vice president of marketing for AtomShockwave Corporation. Fortunately for the fan film rebellion, suing the filmmakers into oblivion was the last thing Lucasfilm wanted.

"They knew that their fans were very interested in this kind of activity," says Roesch, "and they also knew that AtomFilms was very diligent about taking care of legal clearances and generally not running afoul of copyright law." So instead of turning the Death Star loose on fan filmmakers, Lucasfilm chose to recognize and even sanction their creativity. Before they could do that, however, they needed a plan—and a partner.

The people at Lucasfilm and AtomFilms started to have meetings. "It started out as a very vague idea to showcase this kind of creativity," says Roesch, "and over about a year evolved into what is now the Star Wars Fan Film Awards: a fairly structured annual event that culminates in the Award Ceremony."

The partnership appears to be a success for everyone involved. The Star Wars name brings lots of traffic to

atomfilms.com—in fact, "Star Wars Gangsta Rap," the 2002 Audience Choice winner, is one of the site's most popular offerings. In addition to attracting both viewers and advertisers, Roesch says, showcasing the fan films "allows us to do things like last year's television special on the Sci-Fi Network, that featured the fan film contest and was hosted by director Kevin Smith."

While some fan filmmakers are amateurs who are happy just to collect royalties and have a vehicle to show off their work, others hope to use their exposure at the Fan Film Awards as the first step into the larger world of professional filmmaking. It's working already. Even before the awards ceremony, Keith Thomson, director of "Who Wants to Marry Darth Maul," was in negotiations with MTV to create a cartoon series.

In its first year, the Fan Film Awards were held at Star Wars Celebration II in Indianapolis. In 2003, the ceremony moved to Comic-Con International in San Diego, where it unfolded to an audience of over 2,000 fans, with Jeremy Bulloch (Boba Fett) serving as Master of Ceremonies. Roesch says, "I was really impressed by the way Lucasfilm and Comic-Con worked together to pull off an event that, in its own little way, had the feeling of the Academy Awards."

Of 75 entries for the 2003 competition, 19 finalists vied for 6 awards. Even though a couple of acknowledged favorites did take top honors, most agreed that the rest of the field was anyone's to claim. "We had really consistent

FILM AWARDS

LISTS TALK TO INSIDER

by Dave Karger

quality among all the entries," says Roesch. "There are some films that are more professional and polished than others, but they always let a couple films in that may not be polished at all—may be pretty rough—but there's some kind of spark of creativity or magic about them."

While most of the competitors agreed that the bar had been raised considerably this year, most also identified a couple of early favorites. One of them was "Jedi Hunter," a parody that imagined Boba Fett as the Aussie "Crocodile Hunter."

Filmmaker Jeff Cioletti ("Silent But Deadly 2") was one of many who predicted another winner just before the awards were announced. "It seemed to be anybody's game last year," he says. "But I would be surprised if 'Pink Five' doesn't run away with the crown tonight. It's truly a great film. I remember saying, 'Do we have to be in competition with them this year?' Anybody who was up against *Schindler's List* in '93 must have felt the same way."

Friends and Relations

Many of the filmmakers got an early start as children making what amounted to home movies with a video camera, so it's only natural that their siblings, parents, and children often help them create fan films.

Greg Mouser ("Anything Star Wars") drew inspiration for his music video from playing with his daughter, while Mark Rusciano ("Carbonite") is a second-generation Star Wars fan. "When I was three months out of the womb, I couldn't stop thinking about it," he says. "My mother was thirty-five and she was the one buying all the toys. Since I

"I was really impressed by the way Lucasfilm and Comic-Con worked together to pull off an event that, in its own little way, had the feeling of the Academy Awards."

—Scott Roesch

VP of Marketing
AtomShockwave Corp.

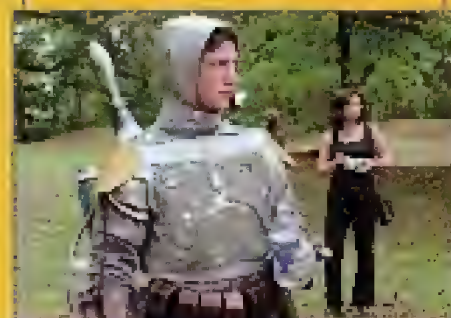
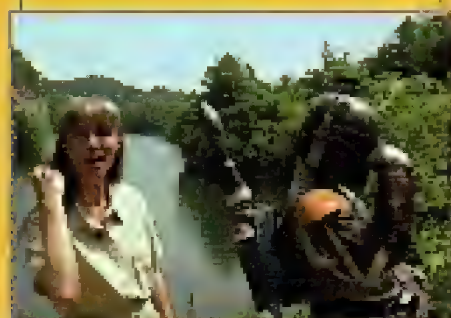




Photo by Lowell Cunningham

THE JEDI HUNTER

Top to Bottom: Heather Harris (Terra Flett) and Brian Boling (Boba Fett) shout, "Bounty hunters rule!" Jim Lyon (Jedi) and Brian Boling (Boba Fett) empty some low-rent light sabers. You don't need a big budget to create convincing lightsaber effects in post-production.



don't have any brothers and sisters, she said, "You don't need siblings; you have *Star Wars*."

Brothers Kostas and Paul Constantakis ("TK 309 and Me") divide the filmmaking duties more or less equally, but it was the elder Kostas who served as principal cameraman while Paul starred as the stormtrooper-befriended everyman "Jim." Recently, they left their day jobs to concentrate on filmmaking, again as a team. "We had to have regular jobs," explains Kostas, "to build up enough of a financial background to get camera equipment that'll allow us to live out this dream we've had in our minds for years."

Eighteen-year-old twins James and Robert Dastoli ("How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Superlaser") have the advantage of being each other's stunt double. Already they've made more than 20 films together, and, like the Constantakis brothers, they share the work and credit equally. Originally, they intended to tag-team the acting chores in a parody of both *Star Wars* and *Dr.*

Strangelove. As filming began, however, Robert was sick, so James had to pull a Peter Sellers after all. This past fall, the brothers embarked on another venture, together of course: film school at the University of Central Florida.

You don't have to be related to form a *Star Wars* family. When Sandy "Crazy Watto" Clark moved away from his friends in Tennessee, he wanted to do something fun when he came back to visit a year later. "I told them I wanted to do one fun thing that we could do in an afternoon," says Clark, "like make a movie or something. And John [Hudgens] was like, 'Okay, I'm all over that. We're going to make a movie!'"

As Jeff Cioletti was filming the documentary "Millennium's End: The Fandom Menace," one of his interview subjects was webmaster Lou Tambone. In addition to their mutual love of *Star Wars*, they realized they had something else in common: Eighteen years earlier, they had gone on the same bus trip to Washington, D.C. The coincidence

Right: Actress Amy Barhart ("Pink Fleece"), director John Hudgens ("Jedi Hunter"), director Mark Rusciano ("Carbonite"), and director Trey Stokes ("Pink Fleece") celebrate with their six new Boba friends. Photo by John Hudgens. Below: The cast of "The Jedi Hunter" (Left to Right): Bob "Vader Painter" Bean, Kristian Ciron, Jimmy Burns, Yveta Han, Brian Boling, John Hudgens, Heather Harris, Brandon Alley. Photo by Lowell Cunningham.





All the live action of "Pink Five" was shot against bluescreen in a single afternoon. The rest was all post-production, like this stunning shot.

"What kind of movie can you make with a trunk-load of *Star Wars* toys?"

—Sandy Clark

co-writer, yoke actor, "Crazy Waito"

encouraged them to stay in touch, attend conventions together, and eventually team up to create "Silent But Deadly" and its sequel, "Silent But Deadly 2," this year's Spirit of Fandom Award winner.

Sometimes you make your friends after you've made your fan film. Weeks before the awards ceremony, John Hudgens ("Jedi Hunter" and "Crazy Waito") and Trey Stokes ("Pink Five") began chatting online. Each admired the other's work and thought his rival was sure to win big. As it turned out, they were both right, and their casts and crews celebrated together at Comic-Con.

From Fan to Filmmaker

While many of the competitors in the 2003 Fan Film Awards were at least part-time filmmakers, many were amateurs at best.

"I know nothing about making films," laughs Greg Mouser, a welder from Belleville, IL. That didn't stop him from making "Anything Star Wars," a music video with a catchy little tune celebrating a love of the movies that he shares with his daughter. "As a matter of fact, as far as the song [goes], it's just a hobby. I know I haven't got the greatest voice in the world, but it's something I like to do for a lot of fun."

Before directing "Intergalactic Idol," Chris Cashman already had years of experience, albeit without a lot of high-tech equipment. "I started shooting films with my neighbor's VHS camera, when we were eight or nine," he recalls. "We were big *Star Wars* fans and had all the action figures. We'd re-create scenes from the movies with our action figures. When I was shooting the final scenes, I was shooting from the theater booth and looking down on this scene. It looked as though it was these little action figures come alive."

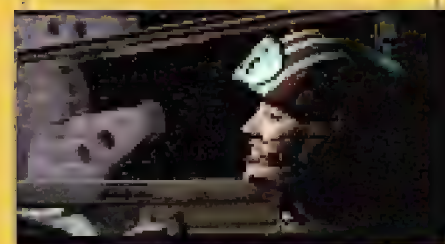
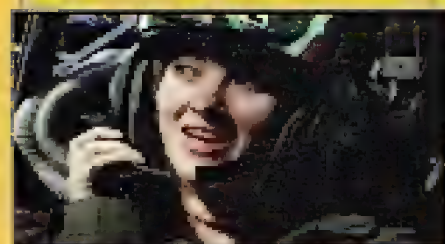
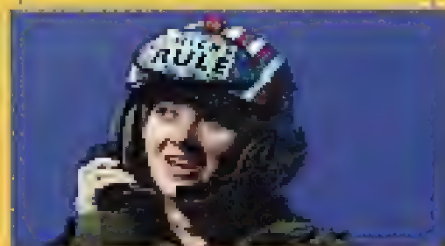
Cashman's partner behind the camera, Darren Leis, made a similar progression from early fooling around with the video camera to a full-blown production. "Me and my buddies used to make stop-motion films with our action figures all the time," he says. "It's kind of cool to go from moving Han Solo's leg one frame at a time to having a dude up on stage doing it for you."

Despite the luxury of real, living actors, Cashman and Leis still didn't have a full crew. "Me and Chris were wearing many hats," says Leis, "including craft service and costuming—buttoning up people's tops and such."

PINK FIVE

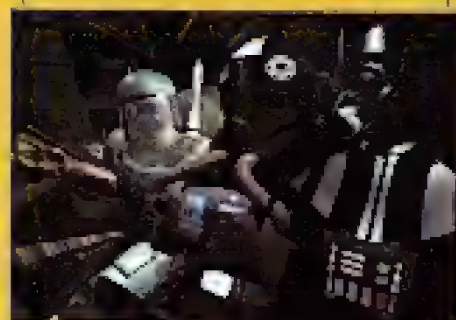
PINK FIVE

Trey Stokes directed actress Amy Earhart in "Pink Five" as an experiment in using bluescreen. The George Lucas Selects award suggests the experiment was a success. Stokes tests the bluescreen setup for "Pink Five."



TIE TV

Believe it or not, Mike Kane's "TIE TV Spot" is not the only finalist to feature a dancing Boba Fett. That clone's got moves!



Equipment was another problem for the makers of "Intergalactic Idol," especially once they tried to move the camera or leave the theater. "We had a very rickety tripod dolly that got us portions of shots we were able to use. For exteriors, we went out into the middle of the desert and just had the [camera] up on sticks, trying to cover it up from getting all the sand blowing at it at about 100 miles an hour. We were kind of out of our minds to do that, but we got a great shot out of it."

For fans with a little cash, the right tools can make the job easier or provide professional-looking visual effects. "It's amazing to think that for \$5,000, you can have a complete editing system," says Jeremy West ("Han Solo Switch Campaign"), "whereas 10 years ago you would have had to spend \$50,000–60,000 for the same equipment. It's really been a boon for fan filmmakers."

Mark Rusciano favors the look of film over digital capture, but he had to consider the cost factor. "When I was working with child actors, I had to let it roll, because you've got to hope that you get it in that time, because a lot of it it's not going to be usable."

Film is not the only expense to consider when embarking on a no-budget project.

The Dastoli brothers made extensive use of digital compositing, but they had to shoot their film in their house, and that meant using less-than-professional materials. "The bluescreen was simply a blue tablecloth," explains Robert.

Trey Stokes had the advantage of already working in visual effects, and his original reason for creating a fan film was to teach himself a new skill. Fortunately, the stage he used provided more inspiration. "Pink Five" was really just something I did because I wanted to try bluescreen shooting on my own. The place where my friends had the bluescreen set up, they had a fighter pilot outfit. I thought, "Well, okay, what can I do with this?" The idea for "Pink Five" just came from that."

Why Star Wars?

The contest rules restrict fan filmmakers from creating new stories within the *Star Wars* universe, so many of the entries are

documentaries or parodies. A few rare entries, like "Carbonite," avoid those categories, but most go straight for the funny bone. Somehow, despite a few superficial similarities, these parodies of the same film world manage to stay fresh, making us wonder just how *Star Wars* provides fan filmmakers with so much diverse inspiration.

"I think it offers a bigger toy box than other iconic dramatic movies," says Keith Thomson. "I doubt, for instance, *AtomFilms* would get as many entries for a *Schindler's List* Fan Film contest."

Many of the fan filmmakers cite the sheer magnitude of *Star Wars* fandom as the reason it is so ripe for parody. "A lot of people are so familiar with *Star Wars*," says Jeremy West. "It's so ingrained in our culture, that you can take someone like me, who doesn't look anything like Harrison Ford, but you put on the vest and you put on the blaster, and hey! I look like Han Solo."

The reason parody is so attractive in fan films isn't just that there are so many *Star Wars* fans. It helps that so many of them love the movies so intensely. "The key to any parody is to be able to make fun of something that people take so seriously," says Jeff Allen (director, "Trooper Clerks"), "and hundreds of thousands of people take *Star Wars* seriously."

On the other hand, sometimes the backlash against the series' popularity can be just as useful to those writing a parody. "There are a lot of people who are not *Star Wars* fans who think it's a joke in the first place," points out Curt Allen (animation director, "Trooper Clerks"), "and if you can play on that angle, then you can really get some things going on."

Of course, everyone actually working on the films is a fan, and they see the quality of the world created in the films as part of the appeal of making a film in that setting. From the first moment they saw *Star Wars*, they wanted to visit the galaxy far, far away. "You wanted to exist in the universe," says David Burns ("Trooper Clerks"), "and you wanted to have a lightsaber and run around and drive landspeeders."



That's Right! Blame The Wookiee!

Those who read the credits on "Jedi Hunter" noticed a special thanks to Peter Mayhew. John Hudgens explains why the Wookiee-free movie merited the note:

Peter Mayhew appeared at a small toy show last summer in Knoxville, so Heather [Tami Felt] and I went out to dinner with him and some other local fans the first night of the show. The second night of the show, we made plans to meet him for dinner again, so that he could meet Lowell Cunningham [my co-writer on "Vader's Hotline," and creator of *Men in Black*].

We found out later that evening that Peter decided to skip the dinner and stay in with his wife, but while we were still waiting on them and killing time, my friend Derisy Hubbard kept firing off ideas for another fan film. I really didn't want to do one, and didn't like any of the ideas until he hit on "Crocodile Hunter." We originally thought of it as another *Vader* film, but once Felt was suggested, we were on a roll, and we practically wrote the whole thing there in the restaurant.

We kidded Peter the next day that we were going to dedicate the film to him, because if it hadn't been for not having dinner with him, "Jedi Hunter" might never have happened.

"Star Wars is just so tight," he adds. "You know where the boundaries are and where to break them." His peers share that sensibility and agree that you have to understand Star Wars as a fan before you can really parody the films. "I think the great thing about 'Intergalactic Idol' is that the characters really stay true, even though they're funny," says Paul Molnar. "Boba Fett didn't act all goofy. He came out and he was very serious. Then

The universal ingredient in all these parodies is love. No matter the specifics, the feelings of the fan filmmakers always come back to the sense of wonder they first experienced when watching the movies for the first time. "It doesn't seem like anything comes close to the scope and vision of Star Wars," says Chris Gortz. "Something about an army being cloned to fight off mystical warriors with super powers—nobody else is even trying that.

"Half the time, if the teacher came and smacked me on the head, it was because in my imagination I was running around in George Lucas' world."

—Kosta Constantakis

Director, "TK 509 and Me"

he turned on this button on his pants and started singing."

Considering how easily parody can become crude or mean-spirited, some might be surprised by how censorial Lucasfilm is not. The 2002 Best Animation Award winner, "Jar Jar's Walking Papers," not only depended on the fan backlash against the goofy Gungan but also included George Lucas as a character. Until they saw it on the list of finalists, many never would have believed that Lucasfilm would condone, let alone reward, such pointed humor.

This year, some entries pushed the envelope even further. "We're by far the most vulgar Star Wars parody that's ever been created," says Jeff Allen, who was amazed his film was allowed to compete, never mind win an award. "We have more curse words, more sexual innuendo than anything that's been produced. We were so thrilled when Lucasfilm and AtomFilms said they'd take 'Trooper Clerks.' We were like, 'Really? Wow! Cool!'"

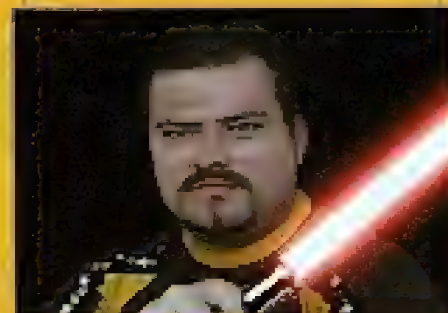
And if they are trying, it's getting bogged down by Hollywood producers, and that's the one thing Star Wars doesn't have."

Great Minds . . .

The Star Wars galaxy is vast, but it's not surprising that some of the competing films shared a few similarities. One common theme was to parody both Star Wars and some other bastion of popular culture. Television commercials were a favored target among the 2003 finalists.

ANYTHING STAR WARS

Even though he claims to know nothing about filmmaking, amateur songwriter Greg Meyer included spiffy visual effects in "Anything Star Wars."



WHO WANTS TO MARRY DARTH MAUL

Keith Thomson, creator of "Who Wants to Marry Darth Maul," was already in negotiations with MTV to create an animated series before the Star Wars Fan Film Awards.



BEST ANIMATION AWARD

TROOPER CLERKS

Animation director Curt Allen reports that Kevin Smith's family liked "Trooper Clerks" so much they told the Clerks director, "That's funnier than your stuff."



TKSD9 & Me

Brothers Kostas and Paul Constantakis joined forces to create a heartwarming tale of a boy and his stormtrooper.



Mike Kane is a LAN administrator for a bank, but his skills make him popular with other fan filmmakers, who tap him to create animations for their movies. This year he created his own, "TIE TV Spot," a spoof of the Mitsubishi Eclipse ads featuring the love-it-or-hate-it song "Days Go By" by Dirty Vegas. This time it's Boba Fett who does the pop-n-lock routine in the passenger seat, while Darth Vader drives. . . er, flies. "Right now it's more of a hobby," says Kane. "If it pans out to be a career, even better. But I'm not planning on doing more than just a hobby for now."

Among the finalists were two parodies combining Star Wars with the Apple "Switch" advertising campaign. Jeremy West imagined that the problems of the Millennium Falcon could all be the result of a particular operating system in his "Han Solo Switch Parody." He uploaded the film to the web in November 2002, but the high traffic soon shut down his site. Fortunately, **theforce.net** offered to host it soon after, and then West heard about the Fan Film Awards and **atomfilms.com**.

Choosing Han Solo as his subject was a no-brainer for West, a lifelong fan of the smuggler. When he was little, he explains, "I didn't have a holster for my little Han Solo blaster, but I would take a shoe and tape it to my pants and then stick the Han Solo blaster inside the shoe and walk around the house, and I just thought I was the bomb-diggity."

Web designer Daniel Johnson used nothing more than Flash animation and a computer microphone to create his animated "Dark Side Switch Campaign." Citing cartoonist Bill Watterson and the hit series *South Park* as influences, Johnson finds animation the easiest part of fan filmmaking. Not counting writing the script and adding sound and music in post-production, he explains, "Animation-wise it came together in five hours." The inspiration for Johnson's film came first from Apple, not Anakin. "We were just trying to come up with something that was kind of someone who was defined by a change of heart," he says. "We kicked around a few different ideas, like the Apostle Paul. That was a little too preachy. Benedict Arnold—then Darth Vader popped into my head, and that was just perfect."

Since the unbridled success of the 2002 Audience Choice Award winner, "Star Wars Gangsta Rap," animated fan films have been among the most popular. Like Daniel Johnson, writer/cartoonist/animator Keith Thomson wears his influences on his sleeve. "I'd put up a Bill Plympton statue at my house if they made them, and if I owned a house."

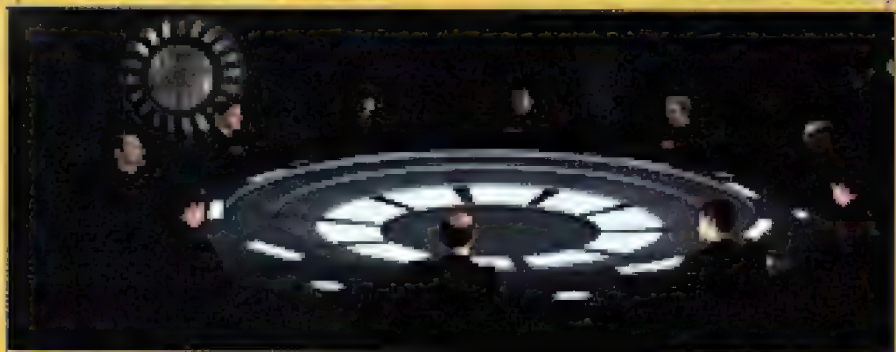
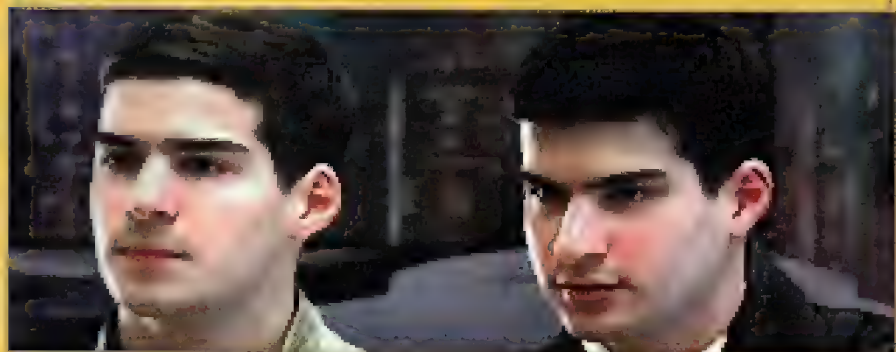
Always in Motion (Pictures) Is the Future

Even before the awards ceremony, most of the finalists were already thinking about what they would create for next year's competition. Even those who did not yet have a concept for a film knew they wanted to make another one. "I'm sure I have another short film coming down the pike by the end of the year," says Scott Patch ("Empire of One"). "I'd like to keep learning and making movies."

Jeff Allen and crew are even more ambitious. "We're hoping to get three or four more animated shorts by the time Celebration III rolls around."

How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Superlaser

Being identical twins means the Oastok brothers can take turns in front of the camera, but only James appears in "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Superlaser."



Darren Leis is equally certain that he and the "Intergalactic Idol" crew will be back. "I could definitely see us being around again for next year's Fan Film Awards."

Others took inspiration from other fan films. Greg Mouser, inspired by the 2002 Audience Choice Winner, "Star Wars Gansta Rap," is working on his own rap about the dark side.

story. "Originally we wrote a different script for the Fan Film Awards," explains Paul Constantakis, "but weather turned on us [the snow melted], so we had to quickly come up with this script. So we still have a script waiting for next year's fan film festival." Weather permitting, that is.

The fan film awards provide a fantastic way for filmmakers to show their work

"A good parody comes from the fact that everyone knows *Star Wars*. Every time you make a reference to it and make fun of it, people get the joke."

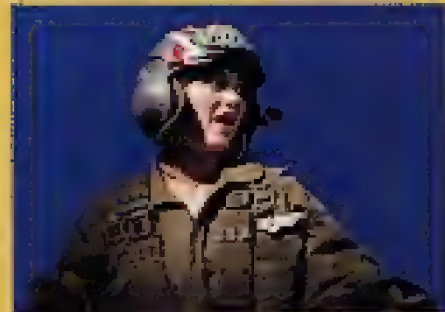
—Todd Coss

co-writer and art director,
"Trooper Clerks"

The "Silent But Deadly" duo of Cioletti and Tambone had already planned a third and final installment of their popular series, in homage to the structure of their favorite movies. As of this writing they had already begun photography and planned to submit their next offering early next year.

The Constantakis brothers are already prepared for the next competition with what we suspect might be a Hoth-based

legally and widely, but they also act as an incentive for those who might not otherwise act on their daydreams of creating a movie. "It gives you a great reason to make the film," says Chris Gortz ("2003"). "Nobody's going to give you a deadline when you're an independent short-video maker, but the *Star Wars* Fan Films gives you a deadline, and you're being judged by George Lucas. It's better than film school, if you ask me." ☺



Matt and Amy

Just before Amy Earhart arrived for her interview, Director Trey Stokes revealed her dark secret:

It took around two hours. I handed [Amy Earhart] the script as we drove over to the bluescreen stage. Amy's a great actress, and we've done lots of projects together, so she's my default actress. I call her up, "Hey, I want to do something," and we do it. She's reading the script, and she didn't get any of the jokes because, as it turns out [whispers] she's never seen any of the films!

I had to coach her to pronounce the words: "tac-TOD-teen." She's like, "So who's this smuggler guy?" "That's Harrison Ford." "Oh, okay."

HAN SOLO SWITCH

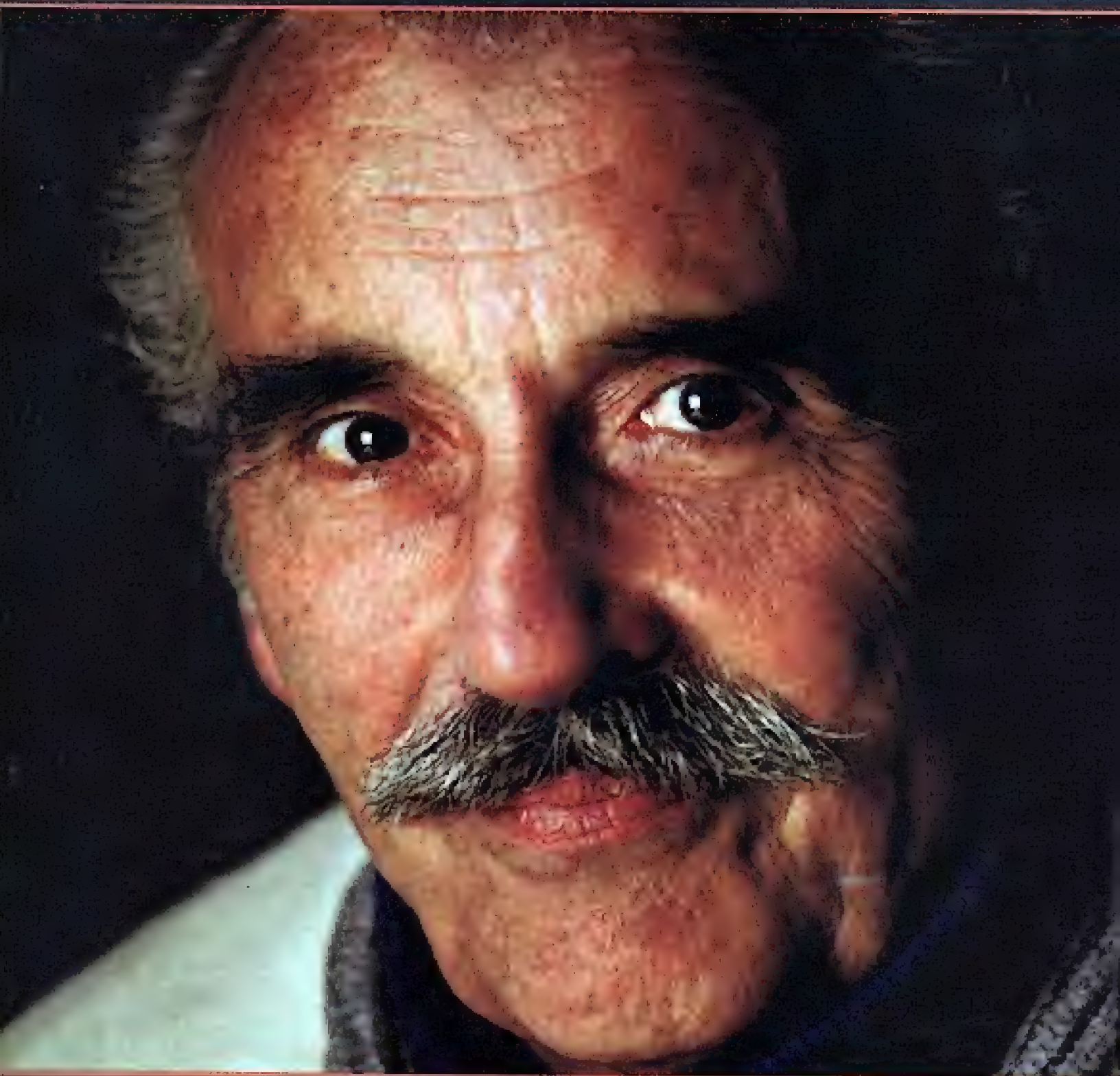
Jeremy West ("Han Solo Switch Parody") wanted to be a smuggler ever since he was a kid. Turns out all he needed were the vest and a video camera.



INTERGALACTIC IDOL

Paul Mohr, Chris Cashman, Darren Leis, and Mitchell Roche met while performing improv in Los Angeles, before going on to create "Intergalactic Idol." Photo by Dave Gross.





Grand Master

Christopher Lee on Count Dooku and a Villainous Career

By Marcus Hearn

"I've been looking for Serenno on the galactic map," muses Christopher Lee. "I can't find it anywhere."

Lee ponders the problem as he stirs his tea and reaches for a biscuit. Such is the weight of his filmic legacy that even this mundane action can prove evocative—his are the hands that curled around a coffin lid in *Horror of Dracula* (1958); his was the finger on the trigger in *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974). Here is an actor who bears dueling scars from such disparate opponents as Errol Flynn, Oliver Reed, and Yoda.

Lee is eagerly absorbing new information about Count Dooku as he prepares to film Episode III. The location of the Sith Lord's home planet may have eluded him, but he has formulated his own theories about his character's background and motivation.

"I think Dooku is a typical product of a military academy," says Lee. "He is a soldier, but he is also a formidable politician. You only have to look at the way he convinces his allies to go along with his scheme, and the way he fools Obi-Wan Kenobi, to realize that he is a man of some genius."

"Dooku means 'poison' in Japanese, but I don't necessarily see him as evil. I think he is a loyal servant to his master, and he employs methods that he considers appropriate to replace what he sees as a corrupt Republic. What he intends to replace it with is perhaps a different matter...."



(L) Christopher Lee as Dracula in the 1959 film *Dracula*. (R) Christopher Lee as Count Dooku in the 1999 film *Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones*. (B) Christopher Lee as Grand Moff Tarkin in the 1977 film *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope*.

Lee has of course made a career of playing men you love to hate, but he is also well known for imbuing his characterizations with an extra dimension: his earliest appearance as Dracula was so erotically charged that it made him a heartthrob in the 1950s. His performances in *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1970) and *The Wicker Man* (1973) in particular suggested a depth and complexity that would have been lost to less diligent actors.

Lee's perfectionist zeal was still in evidence on the set of Episode II. "I didn't ask the dreaded question, 'What's my motivation?' he says, rolling his eyes, "but I was intrigued by Dooku and told George that I didn't really know anything about the character's background. I asked him, 'What exactly are the Sith?' Filming was held up by a good 10 or 15 minutes while George told me about the Sith, how many there were and how I become one of the 'Lost 20' when I left the Jedi."

Lee is resigned to the fact that Dooku deserves some sort of comeuppance in Episode III and is intrigued by the character's ultimate fate. "I'd like it if he was transformed into Darth Tyrannus on a more

permanent basis," he chuckles, referring to Dooku's Machiavellian alter ego. "I think it sounds much grander."

Fateful Encounters

Christopher Lee first encountered George Lucas at a chance meeting in San Francisco in the summer of 1979. Lee was in town to shoot his appearance in the movie *Serial* (his portrayal of a gay Hell's Angel illustrates his versatility, if nothing else) but found time to attend a tribute to Sir Alec Guinness. "George was there with [*Empire Strikes Back* director] Irvin Kershner," Lee remembers. "We didn't talk for long. I had recently finished filming 1941 for Steven Spielberg, and George told me that Steven had liked what I'd done."

Lee's next conversation with Lucas took place over twenty years later, when he received a phone call from Skywalker Ranch. Lee had little hesitation in accepting the role of charismatic Separatist Count Dooku. "George said, 'I would love you to play this part. We'll have a lot of fun.' And we did."

Lee's casting in Episode II was perhaps not surprising considering that he had previously appeared in "Adventures in the Secret Service," an episode of Lucasfilm's *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*. Two of Lee's counterparts from the era of classic British horror films had already worked for Lucas. Donald Pleasence, with whom Lee had starred in *Death Line* (1972), appeared in Lucas' first feature film, *THX 1138*, and Peter Cushing, whose films with Lee are too numerous to mention, of course played Grand Moff Tarkin in *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (1977). "I didn't speak to Donald or Peter specifically about their experiences of working with George," says Lee, "but I do remember thinking that *THX 1138* was a very clever film. Of course *Star Wars* was an amazing movie. No one had ever seen anything like it. Neither Peter nor I had a clue what a Grand Moff was, but I certainly shared his admiration for the film."

Lee smiles as he recalls his favorite line from *Star Wars*: "I particularly liked the scene where Carrie Fisher meets Peter for the first time. She says something like, 'I recognized your foul stench when I was brought on board.' Very good. I enjoyed that."

"Peter and Donald were both fine actors, extraordinarily versatile, but they found themselves rather tied down playing characters on the dark side," He smiles. "Rather like someone else I could mention..."

(L) Christopher Lee as Grand Moff Tarkin in the 1977 film *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope*. (R) Christopher Lee as Grand Moff Tarkin in the 1977 film *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope*. (B) Christopher Lee as Grand Moff Tarkin in the 1977 film *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope*.





knew what I was doing, even though I was acting in front of a blue screen, so I couldn't actually see what was going to be added above, behind, and below me. I could visualize the surroundings from the description in the script, although when I saw it on the screen I was amazed. The creatures in the arena were especially impressive."

Lee recalls that one of his most problematic scenes was complicated not by the provision for subsequent effects work but by the fact he had to synchronize his performance with the revolving Ewan McGregor. "Good grief, that was difficult," he says, recalling Dooku's interrogation of the suspended Obi-Wan. "Ewan was spinning around, strung up by his jock strap and making the air blue. I don't think he was very comfortable."

"I had to walk around Ewan in a complete circle. The floor was made of wood, but it had little holes in it, like trelliswork. The first problem was walking across this surface without catching my heels in these holes. The second problem was having to time everything in such a way that I remained facing Ewan as he spun around. I had to watch him, mind the floor, and be careful not to drag the dialogue."



There were no marks [on the floor] so it was all down to our timing."

Another scene requiring careful timing and the power of imagination was Dooku's breathtaking duel with Anakin, Obi-Wan and Yoda in the Geonosis hangar. "We tried a lot of variations in that fight to find what worked best," he recalls. "We started it in Australia and finished at Ealing—it was quite a long process."

Among the scenes that didn't make it into the finished film was the moment where Dooku brandishes both his and Obi-Wan's discarded lightsaber and flicks one up to strike Obi-Wan. The shooting script also called for Yoda to jump onto Dooku's back. "There was some concern about that scene," says Lee. "I remember saying, 'I think we're in danger of an unintentional laugh here.'"

The relaxed atmosphere on set enabled the actors to talk through such challenging scenes with Lucas and producer Rick McCallum. The incredible look and pace of the dueling scenes are testament to the skill and judgment of everyone involved from shooting through to editing.

Direct Contact

"George's style of direction is simple to define," says Lee. "He'll discuss a scene and then walk through it with the actor. If the camera, lighting, and sound people are all satisfied, he will say, 'Do you feel like trying a take?' I always say yes in situations like that, because I know if I make a mess of it we can do it again. George directs from behind a monitor. I think he's cutting the film in his mind while he's shooting it."

In response to the suggestion that editing is Lucas' passion, Lee smiles. "Yes," he says. "He's absolutely brilliant, and he never seems to get tired. He's very much the opposite of [Lord of the Rings director] Peter Jackson, who is also brilliant but prefers to tackle a scene by shooting 20 takes."

Lee insists that Lucas's reputation for being reserved, especially with actors, is entirely unwarranted. "George is one of the most articulate people I have ever met in my life. He has the most amazing knowledge—he really is a polymath. When we were in Sydney, my wife and I were invited to join George and [casting director] Robin





REPUBLIC HOLONET NEWS

VIRUJANSI PROCLAIM SKYWALKER "WARRIOR OF THE INFINITE"

UNPARALA, VIRUJANSI—The once-gleaming marble edifice of the Palace of Splendid Harmony, home of the ruling Ever Radiant Throne of Virujansi, still bore soot-stains and blast-marks from a Separatist attack as the royal court held a special ceremony to elevate Jedi Anakin Skywalker to the level of "Warrior of the Infinite" today.

The nameless Rajah, speaking through the royal court's Mouth of the Ancestors, read the ancient text of proclamation. "There seem to be no limits to this remarkable young man," said the Rajah, switching to modern Basic as he ended his speech. "Jedi Skywalker has already rightly earned the title 'Hero With No Fear' in his exploits in battle. He is an unparalleled leader and a pilot without equal." Although the title offers Skywalker no practical benefits on Virujansi or elsewhere, it is a revered rank only bestowed 29 times in the 6,000-year history of the royal court.

Skywalker and his commanding officer General Obi-Wan Kenobi had been dispatched to Virujansi six days ago to combine their clone troopers and the local militia into a combined force to throw off a Separatist occupation. Skywalker personally led a joint squadron of clone trooper starfighter pilots and the flared Air Cavalry, using the giant borecrawler cave network that permeates the Hollow Mountains to confound the Confederacy droid vulture fighters in close-quarter cavern dogfights. Without air support, the Confederacy army, consisting of battle droids and Gossam commandos, was decimated by Kenobi's initiative.

Reporters gathered from throughout the sector were unable to ask Skywalker about past exploits on Jabim or Kamino as General Kenobi excused him from the conference to attend to "other pressing business." The well-regarded Jedi heroes are next shipping out to the Grumani sector to investigate increasing Separatist military activity there.

The Jedi Council has traditionally avoided public accolades, but as the war progresses, participation in such recognition has become increasingly common. Media analysts postulate this is a deliberate attempt by the Jedi to build public opinion during the trying times of galactic conflict. "It sounds absurd, sure, but you can't deny that the Jedi are getting more and more coverage in the holomedia," says AndroosinLiann, host of the popular Eriadu talk show *Essense*. "Maybe it's the Republic. Maybe it's the Council. It's as if someone is looking for a poster boy, and I don't think you can do much better than Skywalker."



SEPARATISTS SEIZE SHIPYARD PLANS

CORAL CITY, MON CALAMARI—Although ongoing combat engagements in the Mon Calamari system have kept the watery world from falling completely into the Separatist fold, reports from the Mon Calamari Council have confirmed that vital technical data is now in Confederacy hands.

An unidentified slicer or party of slicers raided the main information network of the Mon Calamari shipyards and absconded with classified engineering documents, starship plans, and performance data. Officials believe the attack to have been spurred by agents of the Techno Union, who have long attempted to persuade the Mon Calamari ship-builders to join the guild.

Senator Tundra Downmea has been assisting Republic authorities in tracking down the slicers and examining security weaknesses in the Mon Calamari defenses.



Illustrations by Joe Corroney

CIS SHADOWFEED

S H E D D I N G L I G H T O N T H E I R L I E S

Dooku's Address to the Confederacy

A partial transcript of the carrier-wave broadcast made by Count Dooku, leader of the Confederacy, has eluded Republic censors. The work of expert slicers saw the transmission distributed via Republic-sanctioned Fete Day messages. Despite the best efforts of Republic Intelligence, the message continues to propagate.

"The Republic citizenry gathers to celebrate the start of a new year, but all around them is undeniable evidence of what they have lost. Curfews and armed patrols choke what was, in days past, a joyous occasion. Instead of rebirth and renewal, this new year brings the Republic closer to its inevitable demise.

"Another year is snuffed by time, yet the fire of our spirits continue to burn. We challenge the Republic, for it is a failure. It denies us our sovereignty and the right to govern ourselves free of corruption. It has instigated an unjust war and brought death to countless worlds on the fringes of its domain, worlds that simply wish to determine their own fate.



"The Jedi have been deceived. They are too close to the Senate to see otherwise. I know, for in my time within the order, I saw the rampant abuses in the corridors of power. Now, the Jedi have had their hands soiled by this bid for control. Three days ago, the Judiciary relinquished jurisdiction of wartime tribunals to the Council, making the Jedi sole arbiters of their enemies' fates. All in the name of security, it is said.

"The Republic brands us cowards for our continued relocation, but it is they who cower behind the façade of security on Coruscant, while our roots drive deep on worlds scattered throughout the galaxy. This only serves to make them a target, and mark me, Coruscant will feel the sting of the Confederacy before we ever consider yielding.

"The Separatist Council has once again moved to an undisclosed and secure location to manage the war, and govern the distribution of vital assets to our thousands of member worlds. Though we have had setbacks on vital worlds, we will avenge the defeats on Muunilinst and Metalorn, and strike back with renewed spirit. Our droid armies, under unfaltering command by the most proven of Generals, are indefatigable. Our flesh-and-blood soldiers have iron wills bolstered by the knowledge that they fight for the truth.

"This new year is the eve of our victory, when the Republic will no longer continue, where reform will excise the rot, and where a new union will bring justice to the galaxy. I have foreseen it."



FURTHER READING

The heated battles on Boonta IV are recounted in *Star Wars: Clone Wars Volume 2: Victories and Sacrifices*, a trade paperback collection of Clone Wars comics from Dark Horse.

Star Wars Galaxies Update: The Empire Expanded

by Haden Blackman

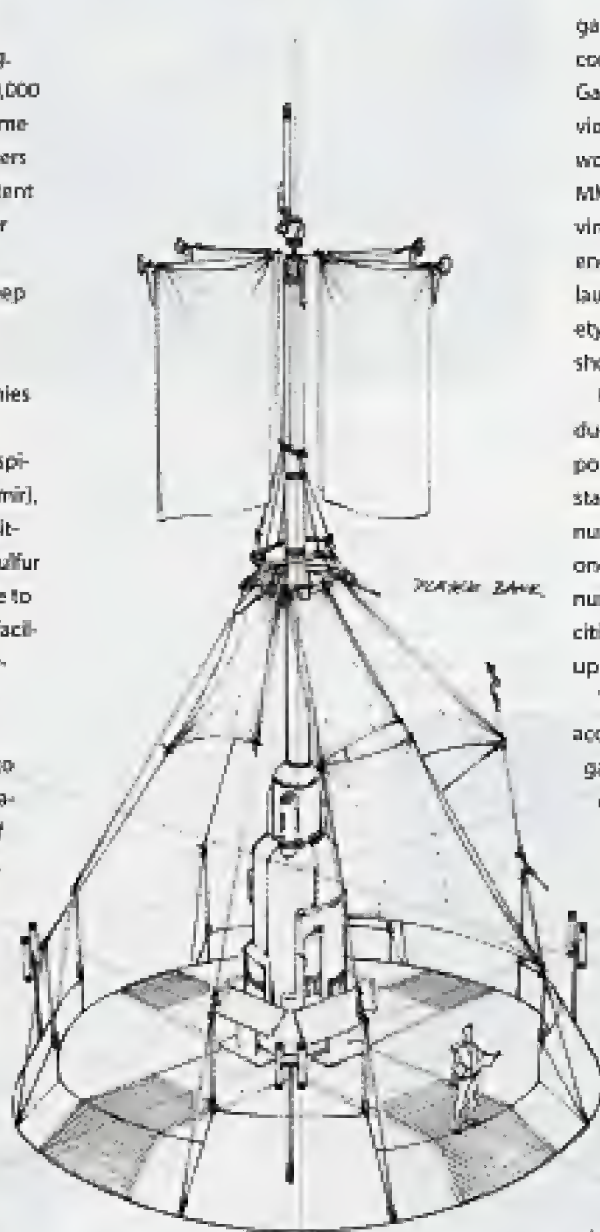
House Hunting and Used Bantha Salesmen

Since its release, *Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided* has been rapidly growing. Not only has the user base exceeded 300,000 players, all of whom contribute to the game in their own unique ways, but the designers also have added a great deal of new content for players to enjoy. Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) games, such as *Star Wars Galaxies*, rely heavily on their ability to keep players interested in exploring the game world for months on end. For *Star Wars Galaxies*, this means providing new enemies to fight (ranging from Borvo the Hutt's Wookiee champion on Naboo to a giant spider worshipped by the Witches of Dathomir), new areas to explore (players are now visiting a huge cave inhabited by the surly "Sulfur Lake Pirates" on Lok and will soon be able to explore the depths of a twisted Imperial facility known only as "The Warren"), and, perhaps most importantly, new gameplay features.

While content additions are common to MMO games, introducing entirely new feature sets is not a regular occurrence. As of this writing, however, the team members at Sony Online Entertainment and LucasArts are preparing to release two major new features: player cities and player mounts.

Welcome to Mos Quito, Tatooine

Early in development, the experienced MMO designers working on *Star Wars Galaxies* promoted the idea of "player-run cities." These cities would combine two important elements of MMO



games: in-game housing and the player community. Player houses, of which *Star Wars Galaxies* already has literally thousands, provide players with a place to "live" in the game world. But players don't exist in a vacuum in MMO games. Instead, they are part of a larger virtual community that comes together to engage in adventure and socialize. Ever since launch, players have been able to build a variety of structures, which can be used as homes, shops, and even cantinas.

Under the new city system being introduced to *Star Wars Galaxies*, players can incorporate their structures into a single city. To start a city, players need only erect a small number of buildings within close proximity to one another. This has already been done by a number of enterprising players: "unofficial" cities like Tatooine's Mos Quito have cropped up throughout the game.

To become an official city, players need to acquire a city hall. Like all buildings in the game, city halls are actually constructed by other players: in this case, members of a new profession called the city planner can create a deed, which can then be deployed anywhere in the game world to raise the city hall.

Once a city hall is in place, the city can be named. Any player who builds a structure within range of the city hall becomes part of the newly founded city. Players can also declare residency within the city, thereby becoming official citizens.

Cities offer a number of benefits to players, especially to those who build within the city's borders or decide to become citizens.



For travelers, player cities promise welcome way stations in the wilderness. Like designer-created cities, player cities gain access to banks, mission terminals, shuttleports, and other structures necessary for adventurers.

Utopia or Hive of Scum and Villainy?

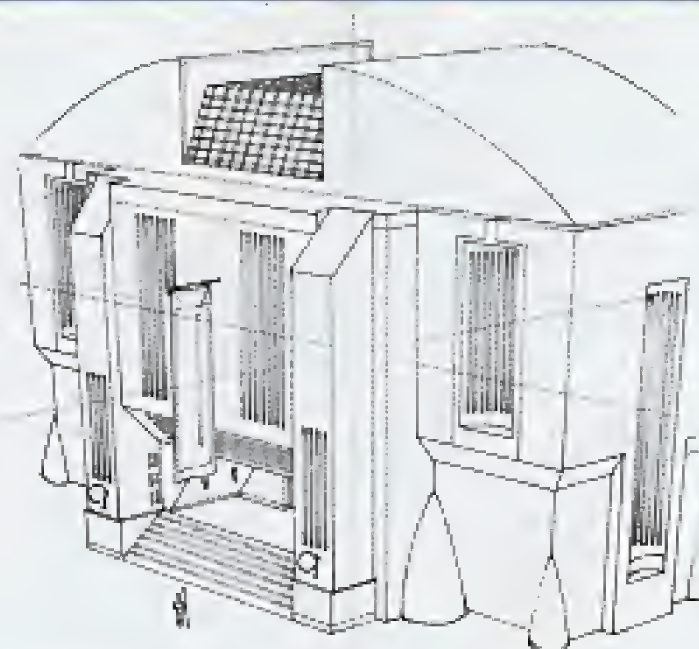
Along with player cities and the city planner profession, the *Star Wars Galaxies* designers are introducing another new profession: the politician. Any player with politician skills can run for mayor of a city. Mayoral elections, held every week, allow residents of a city to vote for their new leader. The candidate with the most votes at the end of each week ascends to the mayoral seat and can begin using the city's treasury to improve city life.

Mayors have the ability to set taxes, set up polls on local issues, and even place parks, statues, and other structures to improve the city's appearance. Perhaps the mayor's most interesting power is the ability to create a city militia. Members of the militia can warn enemies or malcontents to leave the city, ban them from entering, and even attack trouble-makers if the need arises. Depending upon the actions of the mayor and the militia, cities can become peaceful oases or violent slums.

From Outpost to Metropolis

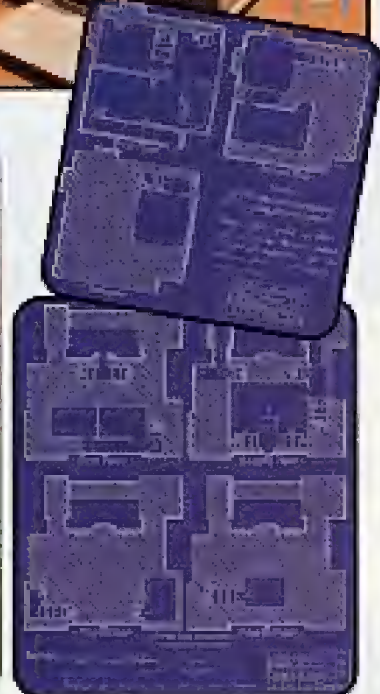
As a city grows through the addition of new player-owned structures and citizens, its borders expand. The mayor also gains access to new structures and city services. Over time, a city can transform from a Rank 1 Outpost, which is simply a small collection of houses, to a Rank 5 Metropolis, which might include all the creature comforts of other cities, including a medical center and shuttleport. Any "city structures"—including the shuttleport, parks, and even the city hall—must be built by an urban planner before being placed by the mayor.

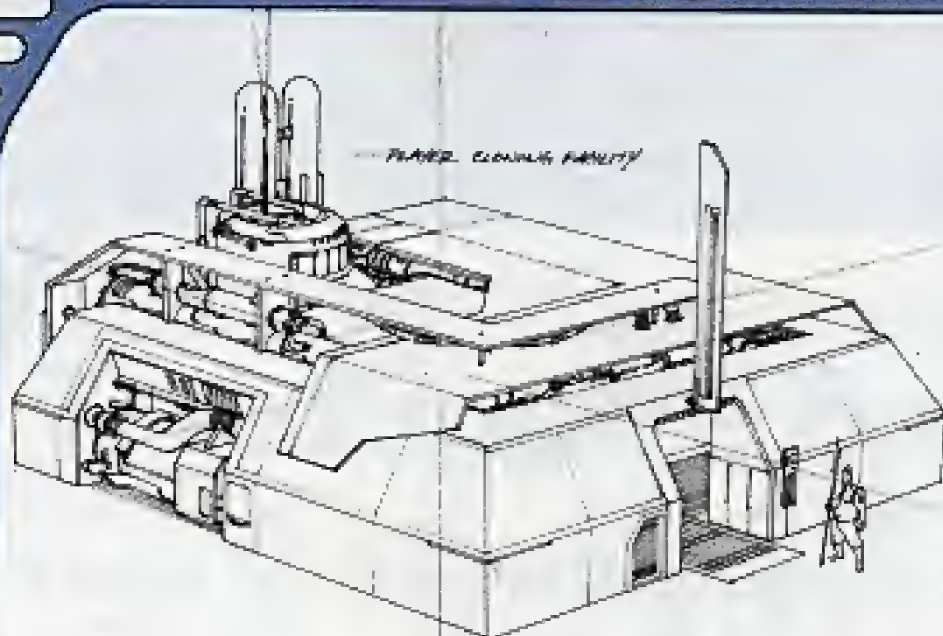
The mayor purchases and maintains everything the city needs using the local treasury. The treasury, in turn, is funded by three types of taxes. The local "citizenship tax" is charged weekly to anyone who has declared residency



DESIGNER OFFICIAL CHALLENGE

Concept sketches by Anne Jungwirth. 1) Governor's small house and shuttleport. 2) Interior of medium house and blueprint. 3) Naming large house and blueprint.





in the city. The mayor can also establish a property tax, levied against all player-owned structures in the city borders. Finally, a sales tax can be applied to items sold in the city. In a larger city, the mayor can supplement revenue generated by taxes by increasing the cost of shuttle tickets to and from the city.

Fortunately, the voting system prevents a mayor from gouging his citizens for more than a week. If the mayor is charging unfair taxes or making life otherwise unbearable, the local citizens can simply vote him out of office, provided that another politician steps forward to run for the seat.

Like many other systems in *Star Wars Galaxies*, the city system is designed to be expanded over time. In the months after the initial structures are released, the development team will be introducing new businesses and business structures for aspiring merchants, cantina owners, and others. It's likely that new roles for politicians will also be introduced. Nearly all of the additions and changes will be driven by player feedback, which has been a hallmark of the *Star Wars Galaxies* team since it first launched its community web site at starwarsgalaxies.com.

Dewback Patrols and Bantha Riders

The *Star Wars Galaxies* world builders have crafted highly detailed and absolutely huge landscapes. To allow players to cross the deserts of Tatooine or the swamps of Naboo more quickly (and in a bit of *Star Wars* style), the designers are preparing to introduce player-owned mounts to the game.

A player-owned mount is a tamed and


trained creature that can be used to carry a player. In its initial execution, the system will allow players to ride reptilian dewbacks, hairy banthas, and two-legged Gungan kaadu. While mounted on one of these creatures, a player will actually be able to control the animal's movement. The system promises to make travel much easier and more entertaining for players.

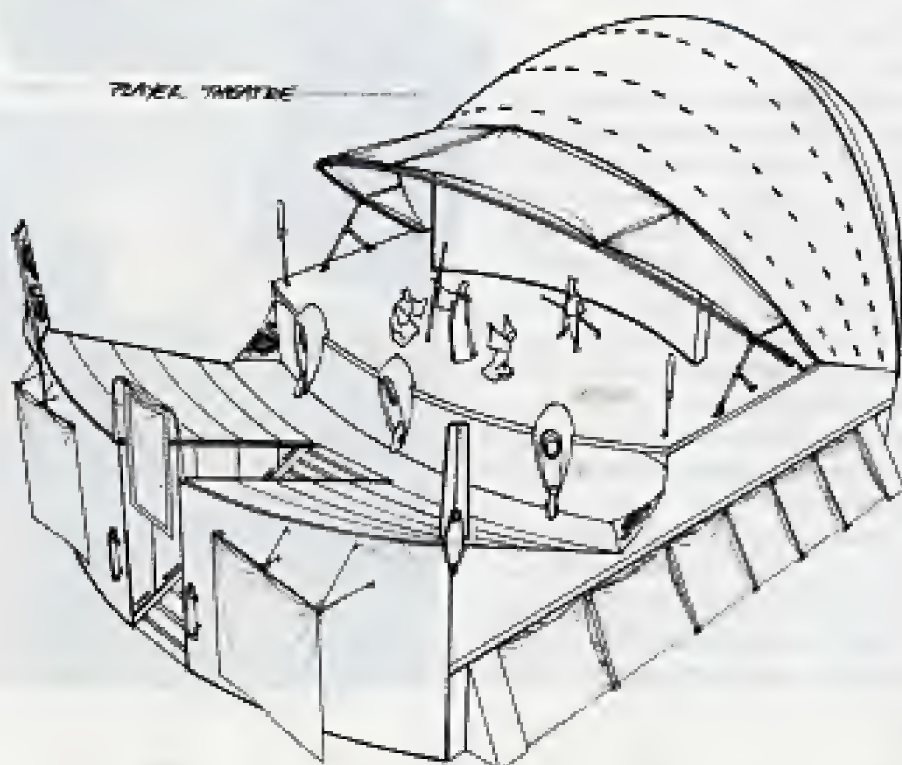
As with player cities, the player mount system will evolve over time. After the initial roll-out, the developers will be adding a number of additional creatures that players can use as mounts. Among the mount candidates are giant insects, rumbling fambaa, huge turtle-like tortons, and perhaps even hulking bipedal creatures like rancors.

The developers are already working on "wearables" for creature mounts. These items, which can be crafted by other players, can be used to decorate or protect an animal. Proposed wearables include a whole host of saddles, reins, hoods, and even armor made from bone, leather, and metal.

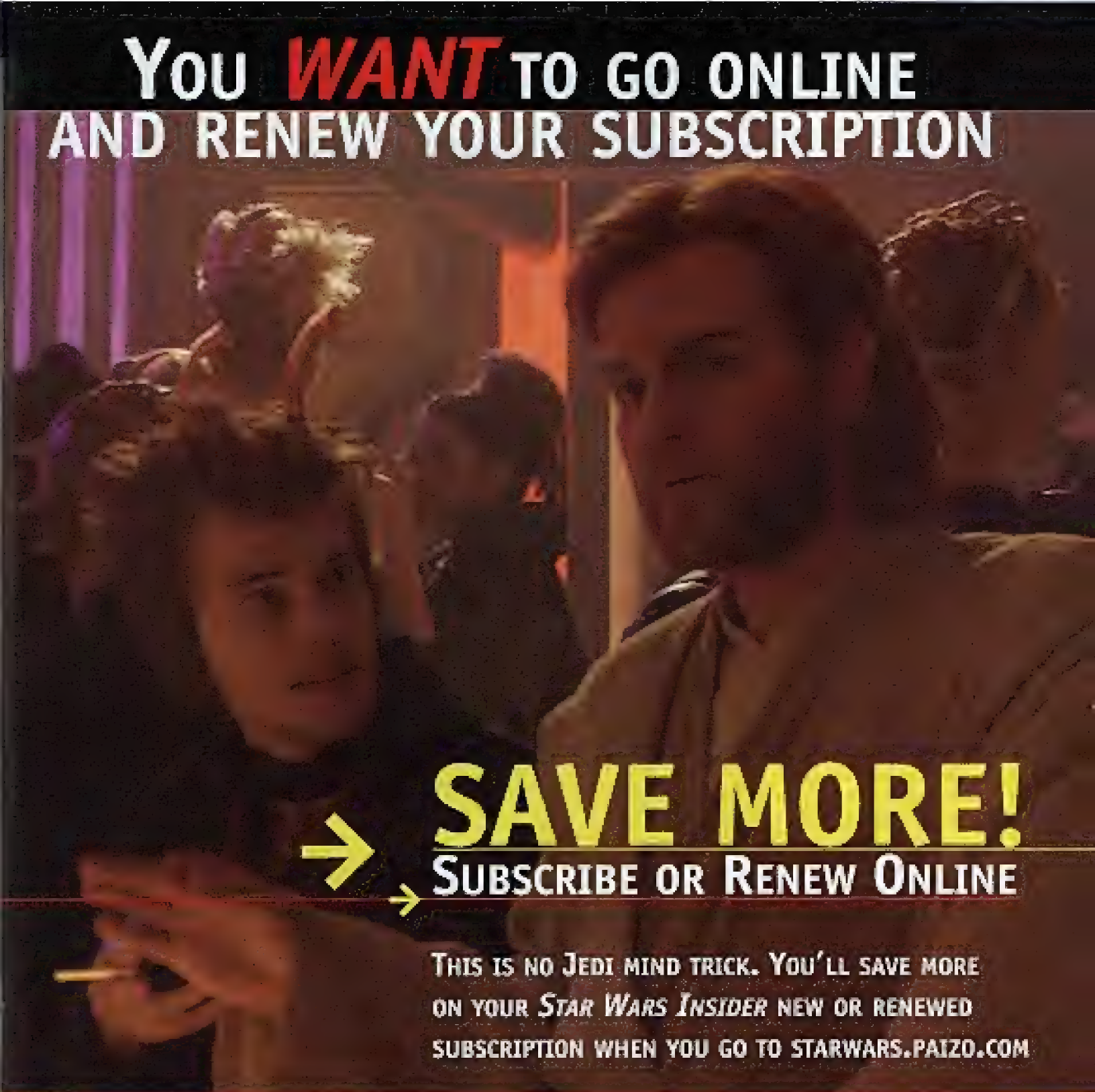
From a development standpoint, player mounts are incredibly exciting because they serve as a steppingstone to player-owned and -piloted ground vehicles. Now that the designers and programmers have established how players will control creatures, the same mechanics can easily be transferred to piloting much faster (and perhaps more iconic) transports, such as landspeeders, speeder bikes, and swoops. By the 2003 holiday season, the *Star Wars Galaxies* team will have introduced a single-seat landspeeder and a civilian speeder bike. Again, however, the designers will rapidly expand the system to include other vehicles.

The Power of the Force

While the player community is patiently waiting for the developers to add player cities and mounts to the game, the developers are eagerly waiting for the player community to discover the secrets of the Force. From the outset, the designers have indicated that the path to attaining a Jedi character in the game will be difficult and mysterious. As of this writing, however, some players are on the verge of "unlocking" the power of the Force. If the community rises to the challenge, next month's *Star Wars Insider* will bring you a detailed look at the Jedi system. 



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Pretty in PC

By Dave Gross

Knights of the Old Republic on the PC and Beyond

Since the release of *Knights of the Old Republic* (KOTOR) for the Xbox, PC gamers have been clamoring for their own version. Shortly after Comic-Con International in San Diego, producer Mike Gallo filled us in on what to expect from the long-anticipated PC port. "There will be adjustments made here and there," he says, pointing out that fan feedback is already influencing the conversion team's decisions. "We'll be looking at completely revamping the controls for the PC. We won't be using a joystick; we'll be using keyboard and mouse."

The same technology team that worked on the Xbox version is also bringing KOTOR to the PC. In addition, a small staff of artists and level designers will eliminate any bugs that can be squashed with art while ensuring that the high-resolution textures make the journey to the land of high-end video cards and a 1600 x 1200 screen resolution, as compared to the Xbox's 640 x 480.

"It's an easy change," says Gallo, "but on the PC we need to support scalable systems. We have to support the high-end machines, but with a minimum spec." LucasArts hasn't officially announced that minimum spec, but it's a safe bet that it'll come in somewhere around the equivalent of an Xbox about a Pentium 733.

Technical issues, however, are not the real focus of the conversion team. "One of the biggest challenges that we have right now is just making sure that the experience on the PC is going to be the same as the experience on the Xbox as far as the story is concerned," Gallo adds. "We've been very careful about spoiler warnings, but now that the Xbox version is out in the world, we've had to kind of

take that up a notch. Bioware's been very aware of that as well, and they've created a separate forum thread that's just for people to talk about the game and the story."

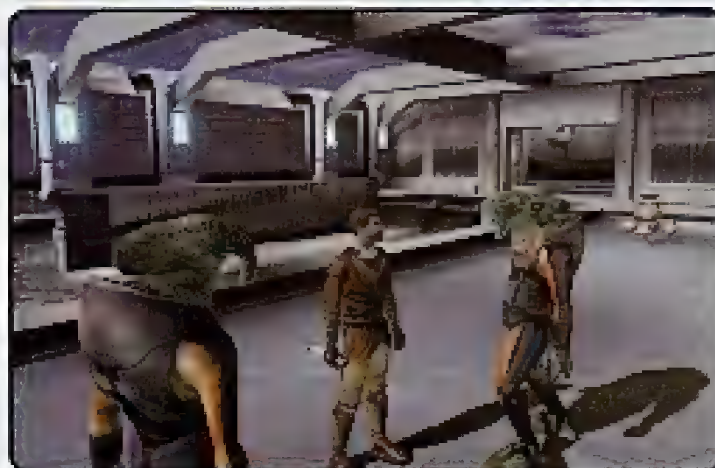
Waiting in Line

While PC gamers have faced the choice of waiting for their turn or else joining the Xbox Nation, there are two good reasons why

LucasArts chose to release the game initially for the console. The first is a matter of practicality.

"It's easier to move from the Xbox to the PC," explains Gallo. "The PC doesn't have as many constraints as an Xbox. The Xbox is a fixed platform—all the Xboxes have 64 megs of memory; all the Xboxes have a DVD drive; all the Xboxes do this and do that, so they're all identical—so it's much more constrained than the PC. If we have memory issues on the PC, we can make our minimum specs higher, for example, if we have memory issues on the Xbox, we have to fix it."

The other reason was strategic. "We wanted to have a lead position on a console, and when we sat down three years ago when we announced the game, it was announced for the PC and for a next-gen console. We intentionally didn't talk about the timing at that point, because we were trying to figure out exactly when we were going to launch



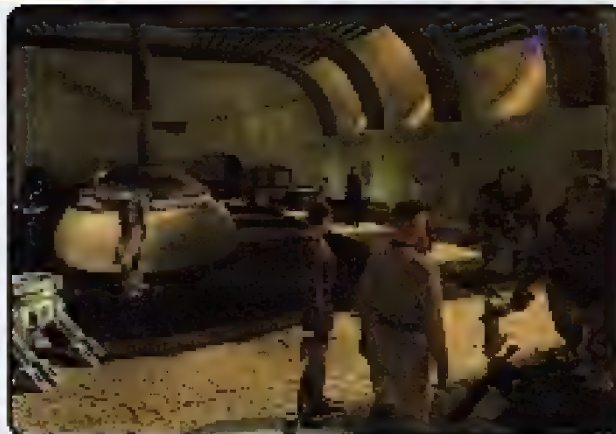


the console version and what that console version would be. On the Xbox, we saw an opportunity to get in there and set the standard for RPGs."

Considering the long and successful line of *Star Wars* video games, fans have wondered why it took so long to create the first roleplaying game for the galaxy far, far away. "That's a great question," agrees Gallo, "and the answer to it is that it's a really, really complex product—not just complex from a technical point of view but from an organizational point of view and how the game and story are structured and how those things work and interact together with everything else in the game. The biggest reason why there hadn't been a *Star Wars* RPG prior to this is because there was no team available to do it. Internally, we didn't have any RPG experience, and we knew that it was a huge undertaking. As soon as we knew that the BioWare team was available, it was pretty much a couple of phone calls between our president, Simon Jeffery, and one of the co-CEOs of BioWare, Ray Muzyka."

Year of the *Star Wars* Game

When *KOTOR* arrived on Xbox, game magazines were quick to nominate it as the frontrunner in their game-of-the-year contests. Gallo is



modestly reluctant to speculate on whether the PC version will receive equal raves. However, what people like on the Xbox version of *KOTOR*, he says, they will love on the PC. "I think the strength of the game is going to be the same on both machines: the story, the characters, and the production values. One of

the things universally mentioned in all the reviews and previews is the quality of the graphics, the quality of the voice acting, the quality of the story. Those are the strong elements of the game. That stuff doesn't change, and hopefully we'll be able to make it better in some ways."

Releasing *KOTOR* around the same time as the massively multiplayer *Star Wars* *Galaxies* was not intentional, but LucasArts is finding that, rather than compete with each other, the games serve separate communities. "I think there's some crossover just because of the *Star Wars* experience, but the games themselves definitely attract a different audience. That's one of the reasons why we weren't so concerned about launching these games so close together. The audience is very different; the platforms are different."

With *Galaxies* set in the Rebellion era and *Knights of the Old Republic* set thousands of years earlier, can *Star Wars* fans look forward to games in other eras? "That's a really interesting

question," replies Gallo. "It's certainly something we're going to look at as we go forward with the RPG franchise in the *Star Wars* universe. All I can say is that we will be looking at other ways to bring the *Star Wars* experience to people specifically in the RPG market."

Sure, we asked Mike Gallo about his experience before and after coming to LucasArts, but then we asked him the questions that matter:

In your heart of hearts, are you a PC or console gamer?

"I go to the console for specific games, and I go to the PC for specific games. It doesn't really matter to me as long as the game is fun and it's a good experience. Right now I'm going back to finish a bunch of games I couldn't finish while working on the Xbox version of *KOTOR*."

What games are those?

"*Metroid Prime*, and I haven't even unwrapped my copy of *Zelda* yet. I was playing a lot of GTAs before I got back from Canada. On the PC I've been playing *Star Wars Galaxies*."

What character do you play in *Galaxies*?

"I have a Trandoshan brawler. He's pretty cool looking. He's red. He's good."

It's no great spoiler to say that you can play on either side of the Force in *Knights of the Old Republic*. Now that both versions of the game are available, we want to know which path you chose... and whether you went straight back to the beginning to see how the other side lives after finishing it. If you actually completed the game both ways, we want to know which one you liked better and why. Send a postcard—or, email—to "Rebel Rumblings: *KOTOR* Choice."

Death Star II: Emperor's Throne Room

by Chris Trevas

Aggressive Family Therapy

Emperor Palpatine's new seat of galactic power was atop a spire on the incomplete second Death Star. The grand interior of the tower was filmed at EMI Elstree Studios during March of 1982. The wide staircases and large portal windows of the throne room filled the entire expanse of Stage 4. From this vantage point the Emperor could observe the final decisive battle between the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. Only black felt filled the window openings on set since ILM would add the outside view months later in post-production. Traditional bluescreen was not used to avoid the problems of 'blue spill' or color reflecting off of shiny props and surfaces. It was simpler for ILM to add the starfield and ships to the black void while carefully masking off the actors who were playing out a much more personal battle.

The evil plotting of the Emperor reached a crescendo as he pitted father against son in a spectacular final duel. Initially director Richard Marquand had worked with a sword master preplanning a duel that involved the combatants wielding their weapons one-handed. George Lucas' immediate response was that lightsabers were difficult to handle once activated and the user needed both hands. The two ironed out details such as these during conferences in the early development stages. Lucas calmed Marquand's initial qualms that it would have to be a bigger fight than in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

He explained that it didn't have to be bigger, because basically it couldn't be: It was the mental battle that would make the *Return of the Jedi* duel greater. A three-stage fight begins when Luke first draws his weapon in anger. Next he is reluctant to fight and withdraws. Finally, it becomes a no-holds-barred fight when Vader threatens to turn Leia to the dark side. The shooting script had been vague about Luke's motivation to resume the fight at that pivotal moment, only alluding to his father saying something to anger him. While blocking out the fight on set and getting ready to shoot, inspiration struck. With the importance of Luke's family history it became clear that his devotion to his sister would be his weak point.

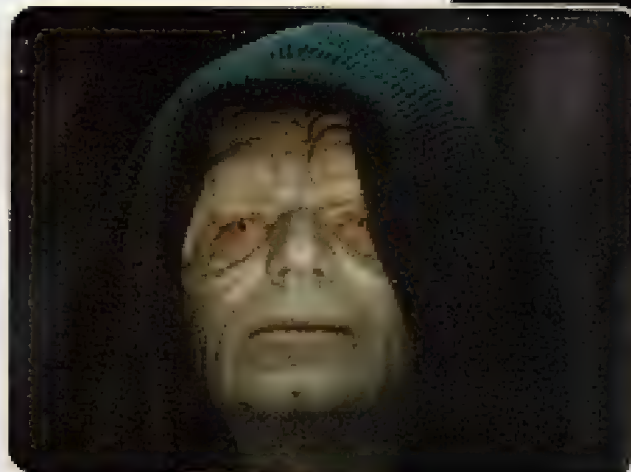
George Lucas directed the last scenes of the Emperor's demise himself due to the technical nature of the shoot and Marquand being involved in second unit shooting elsewhere at the time. Ian McDiarmid was lifted in the air by a hoist over Dave Prowse who kept a light hand on him to keep him from spinning. It would be fifteen years before Lucas would direct McDiarmid in another scene. They were together again for the first scene shot for Episode I, coming full circle from the Emperor's end to the beginning of his rule. ☐



One of the Darth Vader lightsabers used in *Return of the Jedi* was a color-coded prop from *The Empire Strikes Back*. The base of the prop house Grieco takes a flashgun and a metal rod was attached to blade for dueling. Several black dots were added to make it appear like Vader's costume.

Scenes like Anderson covered the Vader costume for much of the shooting.

As a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company in London, Ian McDiarmid often played characters much older than his years. Application of the Emperor's makeup initially took four hours, but was reduced to about two-and-a-half in filming progress.





In case of fire or imminent destruction of the battle station by Rebel forces, do not use the elevator; use the stairs.



The Luke Skywalker lightsaber sitting on the Emperor's throne was originally an Obi-Wan Kenobi lightsaber used in filming *A New Hope*. It served as a stand-in prop in both films, standing in for the more detailed "Hero" props seen in close-ups.



When Mark Hamill commented that his new active role was very "Modern [Lucas] really was 'It's supposed to be'." The parallels of father and son are accentuated visually throughout the saga.

Peter Quant, who had served as stunt coordinator in the previous two films as well, meticulously choreographed the final fight sequence.

It seems that Imperial engineers have fixed the structural flaw of the first Death Star by building the Emperor's chambers over the troublesome exhaust port.

Lighting had to be carefully designed since all three main characters were dressed in black on a dark, covered set.



The crimson encased visage of the Imperial Royal Guard developed from the sketches of Milo Rodia-Jamers. He and Aggie Guerard Rodgers were responsible for the film's costume designs. The blood-red hue of the guard stands in stark contrast to the monochromatic Empire.

James Luceno wrote two novels in The New Jedi Order series before penning the concluding volume, *The Unifying Force*.



A Forceful Conclusion

by Jason Fry

James Luceno Brings the New Jedi Order to Finale

» In the beginning, James Luceno was just going to be a consultant.

Luceno was brought aboard the New Jedi Order project because of his experience writing the *Robotech* series of novels for Del Rey. Under the collective pseudonym Jack McKinney, Luceno and his friend, *Star Wars* legend Brian Daley, wrote 16 *Robotech* novels, an experience that gave him a handle on a long, extended story's continuity demands—not to mention the ups and downs of relations with a franchise's passionate fan base.

Luceno quickly stepped beyond the consultant role, writing the fourth and fifth books in the series (*Agents of Chaos I: Hero's Trial* and *Agents of Chaos II: Jedi Eclipse*). And now, after 18 novels, two eBooks, and a serialized novella produced by a dozen authors, Luceno is taking the New Jedi Order's reins for the climax, *The Unifying Force* (Del Rey, \$25.95).

"I enjoyed it immensely because I was there from the beginning," Luceno says of penning the series' conclusion. "There was a lot of satisfaction in being chosen to do that."

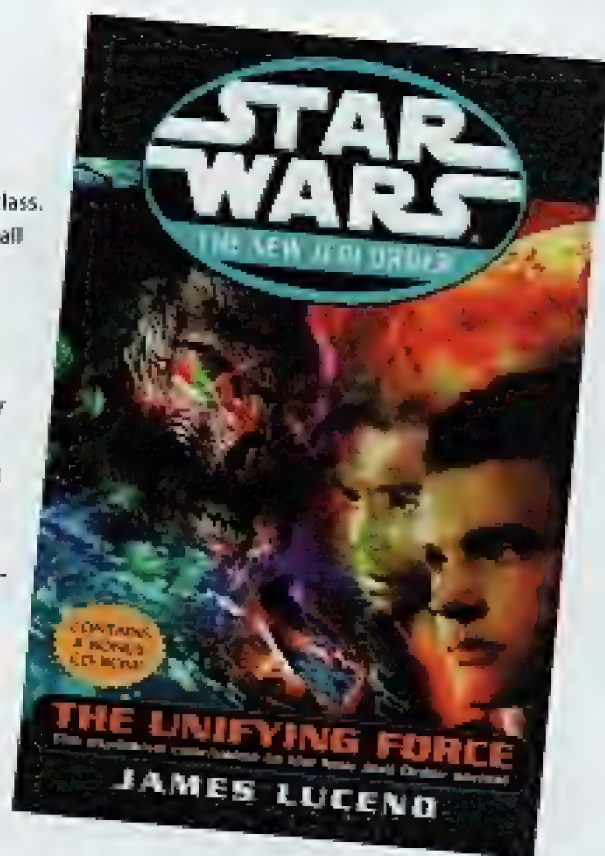
The Unifying Force, as you'd expect, wraps up the story of five years of war in the *Star Wars* galaxy, tying the many threads of the saga back together. It begins with Han Solo and Leia Organa Solo on a rescue mission to a Yuuzhan Vong prison camp, while halfway across the galaxy the wounded living world Zonama Sekot—rediscovered by Luke Skywalker, Jacen Solo, and other Jedi—struggles to recover and play a role in the conflict. The Yuuzhan Vong face internal rifts, as the transformed Coruscant suffers

from a malfunctioning world brain and a rebellious underclass.

Readers who like wall-to-wall action will love *The Unifying Force*. There's an assault on a flotilla of Yuuzhan Vong and Peace Brigade warships that abruptly changes from victory into a debacle, placing Han, Leia, and Jaina Solo in gravest peril. Several surprises face Han and Leia in the Caluula system, where they find themselves battling the Yuuzhan Vong alongside a long-forgotten figure and discover that the bioengineered plague Alpha Red is loose in the galaxy. And as you might guess, there's a shattering finale on and above Coruscant, with the heroes' lives and the outcome of the entire war in the balance.

The Unifying Force also sheds considerable light on the history and nature of the Yuuzhan Vong. Luceno finally reveals the connection between the Yuuzhan Vong and Zonama Sekot, and he provides a thought-provoking answer to the longstanding mystery of the Yuuzhan Vong's absence from the Force.

The Yuuzhan Vong's origin and exodus from their home galaxy turns out to be a tale that reveals the species as more tragic wanderers than hateful invaders. "I was always looking toward the indigenous peoples of the Americas, like the Maya and the Aztec," Luceno says, adding, "There is a tragedy inherent in those cultures."



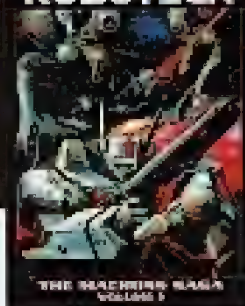
At one point, Luke and the Yuuzhan Vong priest Harrar engage in a passionate debate about the conflicting philosophies of the Yuuzhan Vong and the galaxy they have invaded—another scene that may leave readers reconsidering the invaders.

"I wanted to give [the Yuuzhan Vong] more depth; I thought the only way to do it would be contrasting their truth with the Jedi truth," Luceno says. "The idea is it's not as black and white as the usual villainy.... *The Unifying Force* has a lot of gray in it."

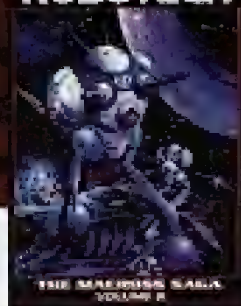
So too does the continuing tale of the Jedi, whose uneasy relationship with the New Republic and with the Force itself has been a major theme in the series. (Hence,

James Luceno first came to the attention of Del Rey with his *Robotech* novels, co-written under the pen name Jack McKinney with his friend Brian Daley.

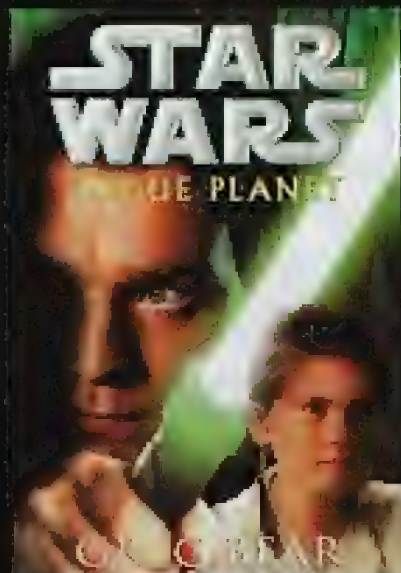
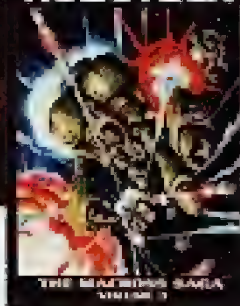
ROBOTECH



ROBOTECH



ROBOTECH



A Tale of Two Anakins

As the New Jedi Order was first taking shape, so was a *Star Wars* novel by acclaimed author Greg Bear.

In *Rogue Planet*, which appeared in the spring of 2000, Obi-Wan Kenobi and 12-year-old Anakin Skywalker are sent to Zoname Sektor to investigate the disappearance of the Jedi Vergere, who had gone there to look into reports of bleeding fast living ships. But Raitin Simer and a certain Commander Tarkin also coveted the planet's secrets.

Rogue Planet foreshadows Anakin's later years, from his rebellion against the Jedi order to the darkness that will consume him—and its echoes fill the New Jedi Order. Vergere leaves with the "Far Outsiders," later revealed as the Yuuzhan Vong, and will return to confront Anakin Solo and tutor his brother Jacen.

Originally Vergere's debut was set for Hero's Trial. But in story meetings, the New Jedi Order's architects saw they could use the little Posh to bridge Bear's Republic-era tale with the New Jedi Order. Later, Zoname Sektor wound up playing a much larger role in the series than had been mapped out.

"It's always a lot of fun when those things happen," Luceno says. "Cause otherwise you're just filling in the material between the plot points. When things happen that completely transform a series, it's very exciting for everybody."

the title.) That's a story that's been given greater depth and its own sense of tragedy in the prequels, whose continuing revelations fed directly into the New Jedi Order as it unfolded.

"It took what George Lucas was doing in the prequels to see that the old Jedi order had in some ways doomed itself by separating itself and enslaving itself to the whims of the Old Republic," Luceno says. "I do think that the story is really in large measure about the Force and redefining the

As for Luceno after *New Jedi Order*, he's not sitting still. His next project is very personal: He's pursuing a longtime dream to acquire a piece of land somewhere in the Yucatan peninsula, a site on which he'll build a little thatched-roof casita for himself. (He even learned to thatch in Guatemala.)

After that, *Star Wars* calls again: Luceno will be writing the text for an "Inside the Worlds" book from DK similar to those written for Episodes I and II, but dedicated to the classic trilogy. Luceno had intended to

"I do think that the story is really in large measure about the Force and redefining the Force."

Force.... The series is very much about the Jedi struggling to find their way through this. I like that we were able to play with the Jedi philosophy a bit."

While post-New Jedi Order novels are on tap, it was Luceno's job to bring this phase of the *Star Wars* saga to a satisfying conclusion—a difficult task with any epic series that has become such a part of readers' lives.

"I thought *The Unifying Force* was the period, the exclamation mark, the whatever it is at the end of the story," Luceno says, adding that he drew inspiration from the final scenes of *The Lord of the Rings*: "Everybody's scattering; there's a sense that this age is ending. It's kind of bittersweet. That's what I was going for."

The Lord of the Rings wasn't the only touchpoint for Luceno. He also thought of how long-running TV shows get wrapped up. "What you do is you leave the characters in a place where fans can imagine them going on and living their lives," he says.

take a long break from *Star Wars*, but then he saw art for the Battle of Hoth and Ben Kenobi's own little house on Tatooine.

"I couldn't resist," he says. "I thought, 'Oh, this is cool.'" 🍌

After a short break to build his dream home, Luceno will write the text for a Classic Trilogy "Inside the Worlds" book from DK Publishing.



"Remember the Death Star!"

by Daniel Wallace

A Rallying Cry for Stormtroopers Everywhere

» Stormtroopers are the epitome of cannon fodder. They get gunned down by the score. They're wretched shots whenever they aim at one of our heroes. They're nameless and faceless in their identical cold white suits, and *Attack of the Clones* implies that they're all identical under the suits, too—or at least most of them are. Low-ranking Imperial officers don't fare much better in the films—they're lucky to get in a single line ("TK-421, why aren't you at your post?") before their chests blossom with the special-effects magnesium flares that signify death by blaster fire.

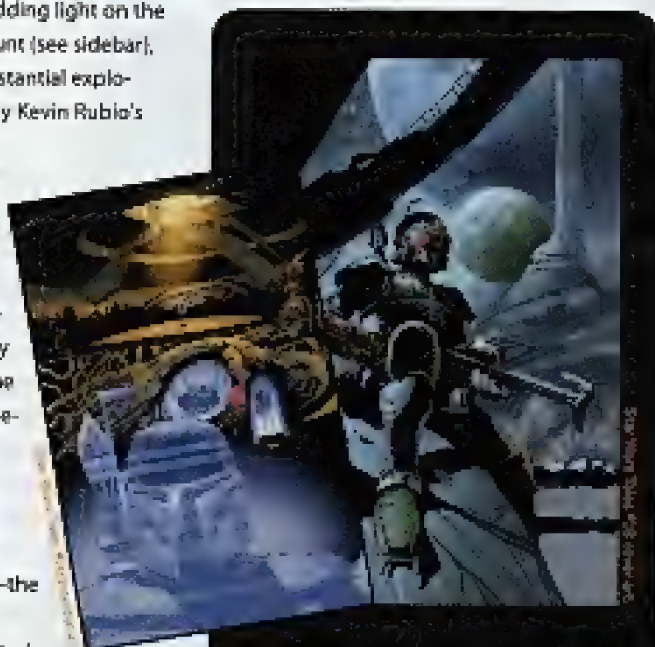
Of course that's what you expect from the movies, where the spotlight is always on larger-than-life heroes like Anakin and Luke. The *Star Wars* Expanded Universe can afford to dive a little deeper into the inner workings of the galaxy. But while there have been a

scattering of short tales shedding light on the secret life of the Imperial grunt (see sidebar), it's telling that the most substantial exploration of the topic is arguably Kevin Rubio's parody film *Troops*.

Living up to its name, *Star Wars Empire* will change all that in December with the three-issue story arc "To the Last Man," kicking off in issue #16. Written by Welles Hartley with art from Davide Fabri, the tale becomes a remember-the-Alamo showdown when a garrison of outnumbered Imperials faces off against an army of Amanin. Fans may remember that Amaniman—the long-armed alien in Jabba's palace carrying a staff decorated with shrunken heads—was an Amanin. If you wouldn't want to meet an Amanin headhunter in Jabba's throne room, imagine staring down a whole planet full of them.

"It's kind of a Fort Apache story," says Hartley. "An isolated Imperial outpost comes under attack by a much larger group of angry natives. But all of that is mostly window dressing. I really wanted to get inside the heads of some of the Imperials and show what makes them tick." It has been said that people show their true colors only under stress, and the firestorm of "To the Last Man" promises to reveal a palette that's much broader than basic "bad-guy black."

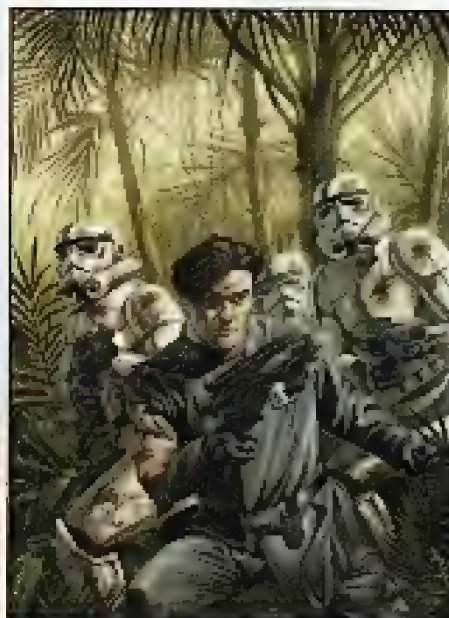
"We see the Imperials in the movies being very cold and dispassionate, mainly looking out for their own interests," says Hartley.



Bring On The Bad Guys

Rolling into comic shops in December, issue #16 of *Star Wars Tales* features a lineup of stories focused on the galaxy's top bounty hunters. Boba Fett. According to editor Dave Land, the one that should draw the most attention from fans is Haden Blackman's "Revenants," a New Jedi Order story featuring Han Solo and Boba Fett. "We've had requests for New Jedi Order stories for some time," says Land. "Hopefully this will make some people happy."

The issue also features "Number Two in the Galaxy" by Henry Gilroy and Todd Demong, about a gang of tough guys who want to knock Fett out of his ranking as the best in the bounty-hunting business. Jason Hall contributes the slice-of-life story "Being Boba Fett." Peter Abalos and Will Conrad tell a tale of young Boba working with his father, Jango. And Andy Diggle and Henry Flint collaborate on a good old-fashioned action story titled "Payback."



Right: Anakin by Davide Fabri from *Jedi Council: Acts of War*. Bottom Right: Welles Hartley's first comic. The minutemen in the "Codex Arcana" issue of *Dark Horse Presents*.



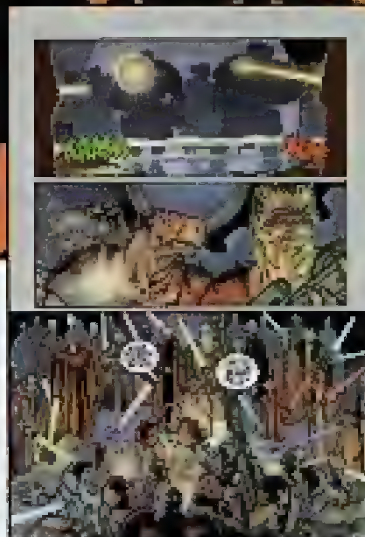
The average Imperial—that is, everybody who isn't a Grand Moff or a Sith Lord—rarely gets his spot in the sun. Following are four comics stories that give a little love to the everyday soldiers that make up the dark side.

... "Trooper" by Garth Ennis and John McCrea, *Star Wars Tales* #10 (Dark Horse Comics). A stormtrooper pretends to be the first one sent through the breach during the storming of the Tantive IV (in the opening scene of Episode IV: *A New Hope*). He is, and he survives—only to be shot in the face by Princess Leia. Flashbacks illustrate the savagery and high fatality rate of stormtrooper training.

... "The Day After the Death Star" by Archie Goodwin and Carmine Infantino, *Star Wars* (Marvel Illustrated Books). Luke Skywalker and a TIE fighter pilot go mano-a-mano after they both crash their starships in the Yavin 4 jungle. Upon seeing his opponent's face, Luke realizes that Imperials aren't simply drones: "The enemy's not just armor or a spacecraft. They live, breathe... like you!"

... "The Alderaan Factor" by Randy Stradley and Bob McLeod, *Star Wars* #86 (Marvel Comics). Current Dark Horse *Star Wars* editor Randy Stradley unveils this exploration of loss and loyalty back in 1984. A stormtrooper native to the destroyed planet Alderaan must decide where his true allegiance lies.

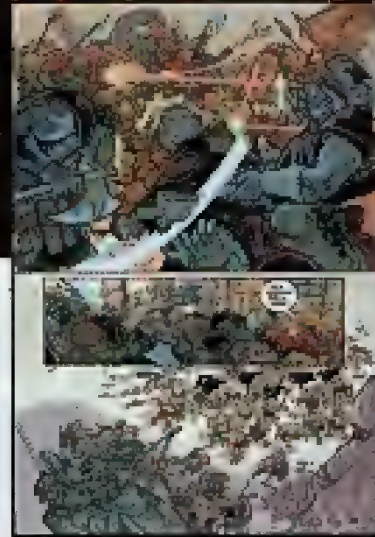
... "Lunch Break" by Jonathan Adams, *Star Wars Tales* #16 (Dark Horse Comics). Two off-duty stormtroopers discover Darth Vader's diary. In this humor story, it seems the Dark Lord's fondest wish is for a surprise birthday party. But do stormtroopers also keep diaries? No, says one—"I have a journal."



"Either that, or they're out-and-out evil. But I don't think you can run a galactic Empire with just those kinds of guys. I think the bulk of your force has to be made up of people who have bought into the idea of the Empire—who think galactic order is a good thing. Ultimately, we know that the Empire is truly evil, but in order to maintain control, the people at the lower echelons need to believe in what they're doing; believe that they're the good guys." Running with the "good guys" theme, Hartley clarifies, "The audience knows things about the Empire that the characters in the story wouldn't or couldn't know. This allows the characters to do their jobs without stopping to think. 'Wait a minute—we blew up Alderaan! Why'd we do that?'"

The adventure takes place shortly after the Battle of Yavin, although word of the Empire's defeat in that conflict has not yet filtered down to the average grunts. The central figure in the Imperial outpost's defense is still-green lieutenant Janek Sunber, a gung-ho officer with righteous reasons for joining the Imperial Infantry. Through the eyes of Lt. Sunber, readers will experience both the heroism and horror of ground combat.

Hartley is a relative newcomer to comics scripting. "To the Last Man" is his second comics story; the first, a Lovecraftian horror tale entitled "The Keyhole," appeared in the "Codex Arcana" issue of the anthology *Dark Horse Presents*. As he puts it, he won the Empire gig only after pestering Dark Horse editor Randy Stradley "until he gave in." While Stradley jokes that he doesn't necessarily recommend Hartley's

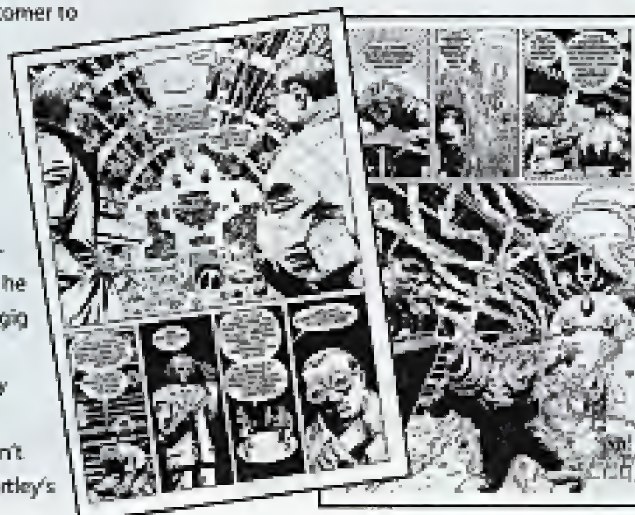


method, he admits that the kernel of an idea in the writer's pitch appealed to him. "The whole 'few against many' thing—I especially liked that it was told from the Imperial perspective. We kicked it back and forth until Sunber popped up. Once we had somebody who could be the main character, the whole story came together."

The art on the series is the work of Italian illustrator Davide Fabri, veteran of such past *Star Wars* projects as *Jedi Council: Acts of War* and "The Stark Hyperspace War" in *Star Wars* (now *Star Wars Republic*). Hartley hasn't yet seen the final art, but he is already convinced of its quality. "He did such a great job showing massed Yinchorri in *Acts of War*, I can only imagine what he'll do with the Amaniri!"

Says Stradley, "You have to keep in mind that the Empire might not exist without Anakin, and the Alliance might not be successful without Luke. They're the pillars that hold up the tent. What happens with Janek Sunber in 'To the Last Man' won't greatly affect the Empire or the Alliance, but the events definitely affect Sunber."

Hartley puts it more succinctly. "I've always had a soft spot for the guys in the trenches." ☺



Spooky Vader, Silent Artoo, Weird Chewbacca!

By Steve Sansweet

What Would You Submerge in Kyle's Fish Tank?

Collectibles are great—that's presumably why you're reading this column—but first come the movies. That's one of the reasons my first genre book was titled *Star Wars: From Concept to Screen to Collectible*.

Well, the "concepts" for Episode III were started last year and finished by this spring for the most part, and the moviemaking began at the end of June. Near the end of August, I had the privilege of escorting Fan Club presidents and licensed magazine editors from all over the world to the set of Episode III at Fox Studios Australia. Need I say it was an exciting—and a bit of an historic—time? You'll see the results of the visit in interviews and stories in *Insider* and the international magazines over the next two years, along with scores of photos from the set and behind the scenes.

The "screen" will come into play, if past is prologue, sometime in May 2005 in North America. And the first round of the "collectibles" will beat the movie out again, no doubt, sating our desires to bring a bit more of the saga home with us. Or, if you read the story on Rancho Obi-Wan in the last issue, a lot more in my case. Bring it all on!

Face-Off

Since I'm writing this before Halloween, I thought my question would be appropriate for the season. I want to ask about an item that a friend told me about. It's supposed to be a replica of Darth Vader that looks like item #42 in the "Ultimate Return of the Jedi Insider's Guide" in issue 67 (when Vader asks Luke to take off his mask, revealing a scarred face). It sounds like a

B-movie prop. Is this a real item, or was he mistaken? Also, is your *From Concept to Screen to Collectible* book available in soft cover?

Joseph Crespo
San Diego, CA



Vader Revealed is a pretty spooky-looking character, Joseph, and an awesome collectible from the era of the Special Editions. It was produced by a company called Illusive Concepts (which then became Illusive Originals) and was personally sculpted by company chief Mario Chiodo. I was at company headquarters when Mario was sculpting the Anakin bust out of clay. He not only had as much photo reference as he could find, but he kept playing the scene from Jedi over and over again on a TV monitor. Illusive also made the full-size Han Solo in Carbonite prop replica and other pieces. *From Concept to Screen to Collectible*, originally published by Chronicle Books in 1992, is still in print in both soft (\$19.95) and hard (\$29.95) covers. It's available from Amazon.com, online auctions, or on order at most bookstores.



1,000 Percent Return

A couple of days ago I came across a yard sale loaded with neat stuff. I immediately noticed an 11 x 14 poster that looks like the *Revenge of the Jedi* poster but the image is bigger and there are no credits. It is copyright 1983 and made by Sales Corporation of America. It is still wrapped against the original cardboard with the original price tag of \$1.49. I paid only 10 cents, which to me was a real bargain. I'd really like to know the true value of this unique Star Wars treasure and how many were made.

Alex Sweers, 12
Marne, MI

Your treasure looks to be in great shape, Alex, especially given that it's almost twice as old as you! And 10 cents is a great price. This was one in

a set of 12 Jedi mini-posters that Lucasfilm licensee Sales Corp. made, more as a souvenir than a true poster collectible. I don't know for sure, but they probably produced several million altogether. As far as value, would you be happy if I said that your poster could be worth as much as 10 times what you paid for it?

Artistic Unlicense

A few years ago, I ran across a neon art poster at a collectibles consignment store. The poster says "The Art of Ralph McQuarrie" across the bottom of the picture, which is framed in black. "Star Wars" appears immediately below in blue. The picture is concept art for the first meeting of Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader, and it depicts a lightsaber duel. Neon tubes (white for Luke, blue for Vader) have been added to the poster, making for an impressive display.

There are no markings that I can see on the front or back of the poster that would tell me where it came from. The guy who sold it had two and claimed that they originated with a company in Las Vegas, but I have been unable to find a company that will claim it as theirs. I'm hoping you can shed some light on this. I'd be interested in the company that produced it and how many were made.

**Steve Kimmett
Boise, ID**

The neon poster is very cool, but the reason that you can't find manufacturer information on it is that it wasn't a licensed item. That doesn't make it bootlegged exactly either. It falls into that area of a manufacturer buying a licensed item—the \$10 licensed Ralph McQuarrie poster—and then doing a "value-added" number to it by framing it and adding the neon—and boosting the price into the stratosphere. I remember seeing these and several other varieties in Spencer Gifts several years ago. I may be mistaken, but I think the original price may have been as high as \$199. That fell to, I believe, around \$129. Spencer also sold framed Special Edition posters for at least Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back embedded with LEDs, also done as secondary market add-ons. None of these have any manufacturer



identified, something that's really strange given that these are electrical products. As far as numbers produced, that's part of the mystery, but I'd guess in the hundreds. Bottom line: a cool piece, with a somewhat mysterious origin.

Busted

I have attached a picture of a hand-painted, ceramic bust of Chewbacca. It is roughly 5.5" x 6.5" x 9.5". I received it as a birthday gift last year from a friend who said his mother found the plain bust and painted it. I have never seen anything like this anywhere. Do you have any information about it? If so, were other ceramic busts made?

**Greg Nagy
Columbus, OH**

Chewie? Or Apeman? You've never seen anything like it anywhere because you've never visited Rancho Obi-Wan! What surprises me is seeing one of these busts today, since they first were produced in the late 1970s and early 1980s



when the "make your own pottery" craze was at its peak. Stores sprung up selling pre-made whiteware that patrons could paint, glaze, and fire at the store's kiln to create a custom-decorated object. There were many unlicensed character pieces, among them a ton of Star Wars characters as busts, mugs, banks, lamps, wall hangings, and for other purposes just impossible to figure out. This piece has been on a shelf somewhere for years! Among the most popular Star Wars do-it-yourself ceramics: Vader, Yoda, R2-D2, C-3PO, and of course, Chewbacca.

Uncut

I have a question regarding the letter on the uncut Topps cards in issue 70. I was at an auction, and I saw a set of Star Wars cards that I liked and figured I would try to get them. It turns out that they were a set of those exact cards, except they were cut. Are they as rare as the uncut ones? I am just dying to know.

**Calvin Baird
Marshallville, OH**

Die no more, Calvin. The answer is no. The uniqueness, and thus the value, of the previous find was the fact that they were uncut.



Paper Your Wall With It

I received as a birthday gift a piece of Star Wars wallpaper. It measures 21" x 32" and is dated 1978, with a 20th Century Fox copyright. I know my piece cannot be worth much. Not

that I care, since it is totally cool. But my friend has two rolls of it, and they are both sealed. Do you know if those two rolls are of any value? I cannot find it listed anywhere.

Chris Owens
San Dimas, CA

You're right that your piece should be valued for the cool factor and the fact that you got it as a birthday gift, and not any cash value. However, if your friend does indeed have two sealed double rolls of the Ymura pre-pasted vinyl wallpaper from England's Imperial Chemicals Ltd., I'd say they're worth at least around \$75 each today. All classic Star Wars wallpaper is listed on page 245 of the second edition of *Tamara's Price Guide to Worldwide Star Wars Collectibles*.



Drowning Yoda

As a collector of Star Wars and an aquarium hobbyist I was wondering if you could help me. I have a freshwater aquarium and would like to place a Star Wars item in the tank. I was thinking of a Yoda action figure or an interesting statue. I am afraid that the paint from the figure would make the water toxic or be very harsh. I have also thought of the top of a Darth Vader Pez dispenser. Do you or any of your vast readership have any suggestions?

Kyle Healey
Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada

Readers? Here's a chance to help a fellow Star Wars fan. Have you submerged any of your toys for a reaaaaaaally long time without the environmental health authorities being called in? If so, send me a suggestion I can pass along to Kyle.

A couple of things do come to mind. Hasbro did those very strange Episode I "Battle Bags," two of which contained four colorful sea creatures each. To find them, you have to place your battle bag in water, let it expand, then cut it open and find the fish in the ooze, if they can survive that, they can survive your tank.

The other possibility is perhaps one of the strangest Star Wars toys ever produced: Hasbro's 1995 Star Wars Wonder World, which promised to turn "water into a universe of creativity." It consisted of a plastic tank, a powder that would turn to a clear gel with the addition of 72 ounces of distilled water, and a bunch of small vehicles and asteroids along with a Death Star tank bottom. I'd leave the powdered gel out, however. I don't think the fish would like it much.

Who Needs Instructions?

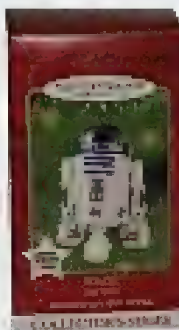
My question concerns the 2001 Hallmark R2-D2 ornament. The sound on my ornament is diminishing, so I immediately suspected that the batteries are dying. How exactly is one supposed to change the batteries in this ornament? I don't really see any way to do it without breaking the ornament. An answer would be greatly appreciated.

Brent A. Schluessler
Princeton, IN

Something tells me you discarded the box and instructions the fine folks at Hallmark provided with this chirpy little Artoo unit. To open the battery compartment, turn Artoo's dome counter-clockwise and lift up. Install two 1.5V #186 button-cell batteries in the battery compartment, making sure the + sign on each faces top. Close the top the opposite way you opened it, play, have fun, and send the columnist some Christmas cookies for his help. Hallmark recom-

mends that you store Artoo between use with his batteries removed, ...

but I'll bet you have him out all-year round!

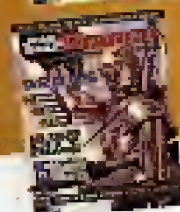


Scouting for Answers?

Please send your questions and comments about collectibles to: SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. Box 2898, Petaluma, CA 94953-2898. Or you may email them to scouting@palo.com, making sure to also put SCOUTING in the subject line and YOUR HOMETOWN in the email along with your FULL NAME. Letters won't be answered without both. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, style, and length.



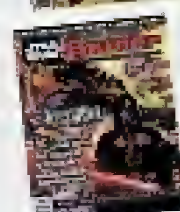
ISSUE #2
Throne and Throner: Handshape of Coruscant, Star Wars Roleplaying Game, and play rules.



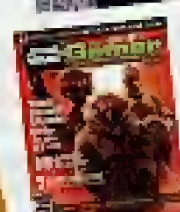
ISSUE #3
Droid! Starship combat board game, Death Star short story.



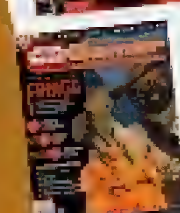
ISSUE #4
Walk on the Wild Side: Handshape of Hoth, Secrets of Kashyyyk, a striking Gungan Gungan racing track.



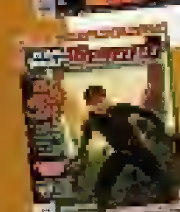
ISSUE #5
The Dark Side: Huge fold-out galaxy poster map, picture of villain, revealed, secrets of the Sith.



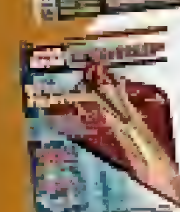
ISSUE #6
The Hunt is On! Dangan, Zuckuss, IG-100, heroic combat scenes, Dark Horse comic characters, "Welcome to the Jungle" adventure.



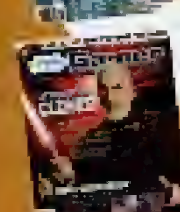
ISSUE #7
Living on the Edge! Huge Star Wars' landing campaign setting and adventure, a map of the Galaxy, "Secrets of Mos Eisley," and Jagged from Star Wars' Cuckoo.



ISSUE #8
The New Jedi Order! Spaceport guide to the New Jedi Order, "The Force of the Future" and "Top Secret Influence" adventures, "Bonds of Brotherhood" by Greg Keyes.



ISSUE #9
Starship! Enter by the Mandalorian! Create your own squadron, Aces of Wraith Squadron, "Save the Trenches" adventure, "Dark Tidings" by Greg Keyes.



ISSUE #10
Aces of the Clones! Clone Wars game guide, "War on Wraith" by Greg Keyes, "Hatched" by Timothy Zahn, Star Wars TCG and roleplaying, "Jedi's Legacy" role adventures.

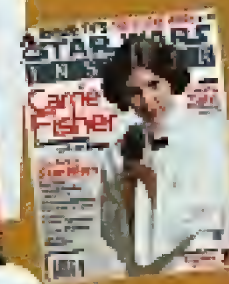
BACK TO THE SOURCE



ESSJC #52
 Tuesday 1: The Egyptian Museum
 2ND, Khaled Ghabra, Mohamed Elshik, Anthony Darnach, Jacques Elgarni
 and Ghabra 1



ISSUE #32
 Why's Wife on Her April Birthday
 Scavenger of Co-scode II. Lighthead
 Criminal, Emergency of New Year's
 Return to Crime.



1942-1949
 Captain Peter Starling of the West
 Surrey Territorial Army, Army Reserve
 Officer, Inverclyde Coast Gun Battery,
 Farnley Point, Starling Territorial
 Officer, Mary Farnley, Torquay, Devon
 (October 1 of 1941).

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Conventions & Clone Wars

By starwars.hasbro.com

A Recap of Summer 2003, and a Glimpse Into the Future

» Hasbro representatives had a great time meeting with *Star Wars* fans at this past summer's Comic-Con in San Diego and Wizard World Convention in Chicago. You may recall from last month's "Toy Box" (or while at Comic-Con) that Hasbro announced the Jedi Master Points Auction. This will allow registered users of starwars.hasbro.com to bid on hard-to-find items like the Jorg Sacul figure, the Toy Fair Darth Vader, and the R2-D2 Astromech Droid. For complete details about the promotion, please go to starwars.hasbro.com.

At Comic-Con, Hasbro also offered a sneak preview of the 2004 release schedule, specifically the themes for the basic figures and the names of a few of the basic and deluxe figures. Those attending Wizard World got to see these toys in person for the first time. Shown here are some of the 2004 basic figures, including the Hoth Trooper, R-3PO and Luke Skywalker Hoth Attack, as well as Hasbro's new deluxe figures, including the Wampa with cave, General Rieekan with tactical map, and C-3PO with escape pod. All of these figures are due out at the beginning of 2004.

Other basic figures also previewed at Wizard World, and also shown here, were the last wave of 2003 figures, including three new *Attack of the Clones* figures. These figures included Ayy Vida, a Twi'lek patron of the Outlander Night Club on Coruscant and a consort of local crime boss Hat Lo; the Slythmonger Elan Sleazebaggano, a slimy dealer of illegal substances who frequents the entertainment district's nightclubs and bars to peddle his wares; and last but certainly not least, Obi-Wan Kenobi, also from

Updated 2004 Action Figure Release Schedule

Basic Wave 1—Hoth

Luke Skywalker (Hoth Attack)
R-3PO
Hoth Trooper

Basic Wave 2—Tatooine

Luke Skywalker (Jedi)
R2-D2 with Drink Tray
R4-G4

Basic Wave 3—Jabba's Palace

Shadee Ubb
Lando (Skill Guard)
J'Quille
Elom
Jedi Knight Luke Skywalker (Hologram)

Basic Wave 4—Battle of Yavin

Captain Antilles
General Dodonna

Basic Wave 5—Star Destroyer

Dengar

Ultra Wave 1

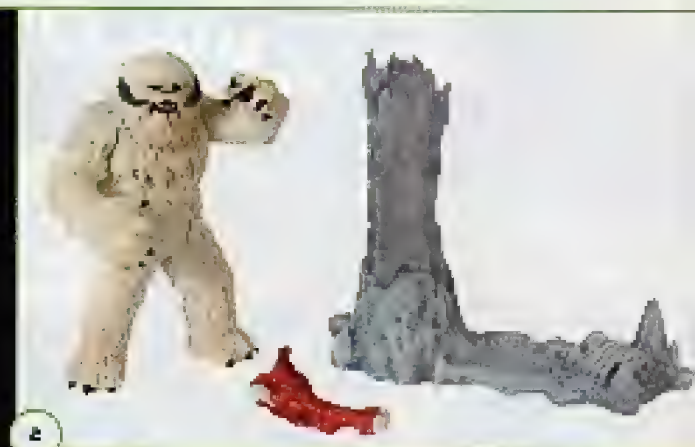
Wampa with Cave
General Rieekan with tactical map
C-3PO with Escape Pod

Ultra Wave 2

Jabba the Hutt
B'omarr Monk, Bubo and Wol Cabesche

How Does Hasbro Pick Its Figures?

There are many steps in determining which figures to create each year. Outside of the obvious tooling, financial considerations, and review of the previous year's lineup, part of that process is getting feedback from *Star Wars* fans—which is actually the main reason Hasbro reps attend conventions like Comic-Con and Wizard World.

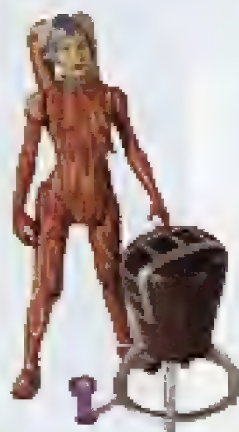


the Outlander Night Club scene, where he uses a Jedi mind trick to convince Sleazebaggano to change his ways. Each figure is authentically styled from the *Coruscant* scene and comes with environment accessories from the Outlander Club. The figures also have multiple points of articulation, so you can re-live this scene over and over again.

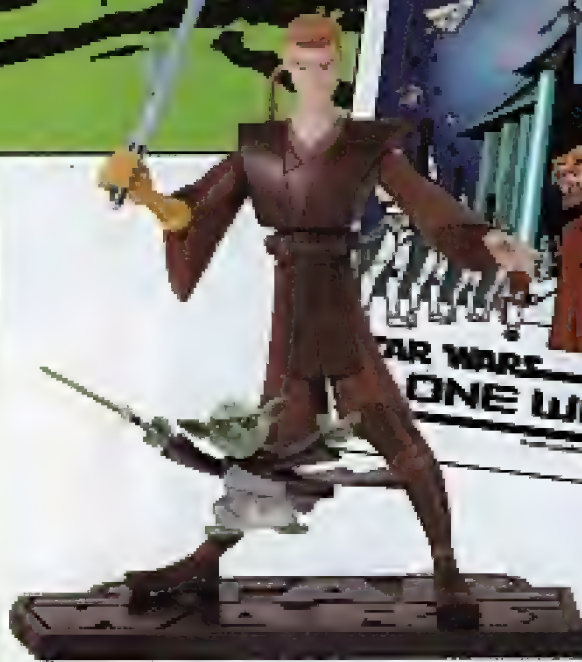
As announced earlier this year, the *Clone Wars* are coming to Cartoon Network this fall. The unique styling of the *Clone Wars* animation was created by Genndy Tartakovsky, the acclaimed creator of *Samurai Jack* and *Dexter's Laboratory* for the Cartoon Network. This awesome animation style is great for a TV series, and it's equally cool for toys. So for Spring 2004, Hasbro will offer an exclusive line of animated-style figures focusing on the core characters from the *Clone Wars* animation. Here's a first look at the animated Yoda, brought to life in 3D form. The initial wave will include Anakin Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Mace Windu, and Aayla Ventress. Look for these awesome figures starting in January. 🌟



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

- 1 Luke features ball-jointed shoulders and comes with removable goggles as well as the obligatory lightsaber.
- 2 The swamp cave connects to Luke's base to suspend the hero in cold storage.
- 3 R-3PO has long since had his own trading card, but this is his first appearance as an action figure.
- 4 The Outer Rim bar stool that accompanies Ahsoka will go nicely with Obi-Wan and Ewan's bar.
- 5 Here's your first look at Hasbro's take on the Clone Wars animation-style Yoda and Anakin figures!
- 6 The off-requested General Kenobi will arrive fully equipped to play the Rebel's tactical withdrawal.
- 7 Obi-Wan and Ewan Shazslaggino each come with one section of the Outer Rim's bar.
- 8 C3PO's escape pod is large enough to fit your favorite astronomer along with the fuzzy protocol droid.
- 9 The new Hoth trooper will beef up the lines of Echo Base defenders in many a collector's dreams.

Master Replicas

Sure, sure, Anakin vs. Obi-Wan is the fight everyone's anticipating these days, but until then, the greatest Star Wars duel remains the father-and-son showdown at the end of *Return of the Jedi*. Now Master Replicas provides the weapons for that fateful duel with their Darth Vader (1) and Luke Skywalker (2) Force FX lightsabers.

The metal hilts of these lightsabers are beauties, not quite as fine as those for the company's high-end collectible lightsaber hilts, but far superior to the toy lightsabers you used to chase your little brother around the back yard. While the instruction leaflet cautions that these are collectibles, not toys to be used for dueling, it's hard to resist the dark side urge to take a few swings at your siblings (or co-workers) once you activate the blade and hear the unmistakable sound of a lightsaber ignition. In addition to the power-up and power-down effects, swinging the saber evokes the famous lightsaber hum, while striking a target with the polypropylene blade creates the sizzling saber-against-saber clash. All of these sound effects are digital recordings from the Star Wars movies, and they couldn't sound any more authentic.

The Luke FX lightsaber, like last year's Anakin FX lightsaber, uses an electro-luminescent material—the stuff used to backlight watches—to create the famous bright glow. The same materials can't quite reproduce the fiery effect of a Sith blade, however, so the Unnights at Master Replicas devised an ingenious solution. The Vader blade, which we tested under the highly scientific conditions have at the *Snider* offices, is made of 72 LED lights. These lights are divided into eight sections that ignite sequentially, giving the blade a surprisingly realistic rising effect when you turn it on.

That bonus feature makes the Vader blade our weapon of choice, but there are other factors that might influence your light side/dark side decision.

"I think Vader is a big deal," says Tom Grimm of Master Replicas. "People have wanted us to do a Vader saber for a long time, just because it's Vader." Future Force FX lightsabers have yet to be determined, but we fear Mace Windu's electron-placed purple saber is high on the wish list.

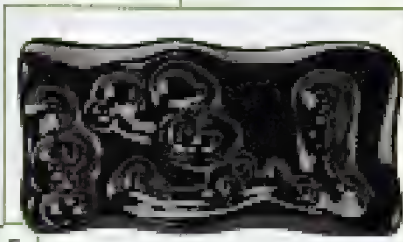
The Luke and Vader Force FX lightsabers retail for \$139.00 and come with sturdy plastic display stands.

Master Replicas has also announced a few more additions to their line of archive-quality prop replicas. Jango Fett's dual WESTAR-34 blasters (3) come home to collectors along with a custom display case, as well as the usual numbered plaque. The edition is sized at 1,500 pairs worldwide, and priced at \$449.

Fans of the dark side can now get their hands on Emperor Palpatine's twisted ebony cane (4) and cloak clasp (5), along with a wall-mounted display unit and numbered plaque. The price is \$199, and the edition size is 1,500.

Are you Jabba's kind of scum? If so, take your pick of three different editions of the Thermal Detonator that Leia brought to Jabba's Palace while disguised as the Ubese Bounty Hunter Boushh. For \$199, you can purchase the unweathered version (6), as seen in *Return of the Jedi*, which is limited to 750 units. For \$249, you can get the more limited "As First Built" edition (7), which has a clean, polished chrome finish and a run size of 500. And for \$299, you can get the Signature Edition, which is the weathered version with Carrie Fisher's autograph on the numbered plaque. The Signature Edition is limited to 750 units. All three versions come with a custom display case, and feature authentic light and sound effects.

For more info on the Force FX lightsabers and Limited Edition collectibles, check out www.masterreplicas.com.





LEGO Fans Rejoice

Shortly after last issue's Holiday Gift Guide went to press, we learned of three new LEGO sets that we most certainly would have recommended.

First up is a spectacular Cloud City playset (8) featuring several portions of Bespin that can be combined to create a playset over two feet long. The locations represented are the carbon-freeze chamber, the dining hall, a landing pad, and the control room and gantry where Luke and Vader's epic duel takes place. The seven minifigures include Han, Leia, Boba Fett, Darth Vader, and a stormtrooper, as well as a Leia in her Bespin gown and—in his first-ever mini-figure appearance—Lando Calrissian. The set is a bit pricey at \$99.99, and you can only buy it directly from LEGO, but there is a lot of play value here.

Shortly after news of the Cloud City set broke, LEGO announced an updated version of the X-wing Fighter (9), this time with a Dagobah theme. Accessories include Yoda's hut and three mini-figures, including Yoda, Artoo, and a new version of Luke. The X-wing itself has been redesigned and includes retractable landing gear and a knob that opens the S-folds into attack position. The new X-wing set will retail around \$49.99.

The third new product is the Ultimate Collector's Series Snowspeeder (10), currently available only through LEGO Shop-at-Home. Following the tradition of the UCS X-wing, this highly detailed set is loaded with cool features like moving controls in the two-man cockpit. The price is \$199.99.

The X-wing will be available at the usual retail outlets. The two Shop-at-Home exclusives are available online from shop.lego.com or by calling 1-800-453-4652.

Special Additions

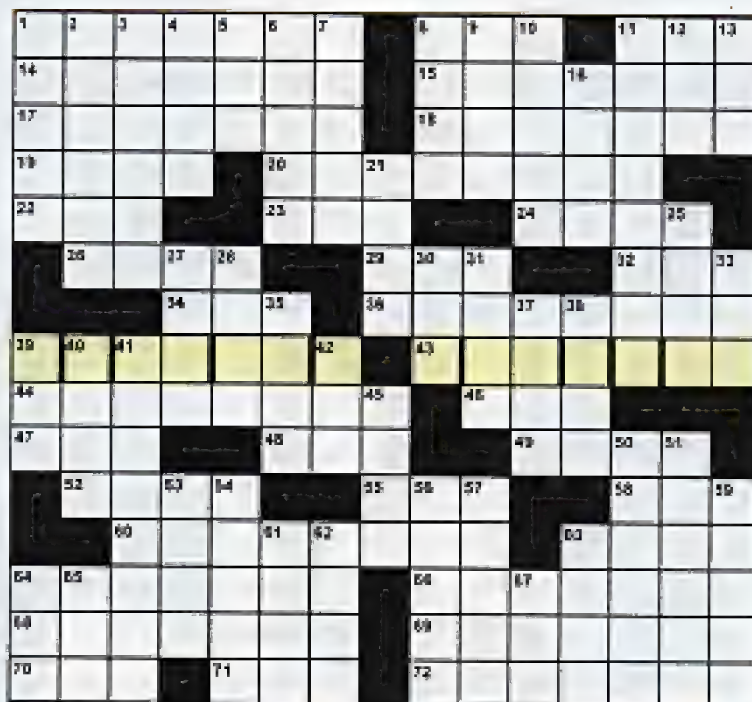
by Mike Selinker

ACROSS

- 1 **SITH**
- 8 Emulate Harrison Ford
- 11 Choose
- 14 Way to clean your T-Bird
- 15 **MARA**
- 17 **PORTMAN**
- 18 Hard workers
- 19 Easily lost objects
- 20 **VADER**
- 22 Ed's Cartoon Network pal
- 23 Measurement of energy, for short
- 24 Ed's other Cartoon Network pal
- 26 Hair care products
- 29 Art. of calcium, perhaps
- 32 ___ and ash
- 34 Alias, in APBs
- 36 **HAN**
- 39 What are added, in order, to the bold clues to make useful clues
- 44 **BINKS**
- 46 *Star Wars* Celebration, e.g.
- 47 Capital city that coined the word "robot"
- 48 Baby's cry
- 49 Outside, in a Pedraza
- 52 Saw
- 55 Fourth word of the *Star Wars* intro
- 58 New Jedi Order-era Alderaanian senator, ___ Orga
- 60 **MARK**
- 63 Spielberg's birthplace
- 64 They're listed on page 4
- 68 **BEN**
- 69 **SMITS**
- 69 Dhe Guevara's real first name
- 70 Jabba's droid, ___ Mynockine
- 71 Car-builders' org.
- 72 **CARRIE**

DOWN

- 1 "Hi! Knew You Were Givin'! I've Baked ___"
- 2 Like *2001: A Space Odyssey*
- 3 *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* strong man
- 4 Harry Potter messengers
- 5 Trade planet Abregado, ___
- 6 Abbreviation meaning "founded"



"The Tribe Has Spoken."

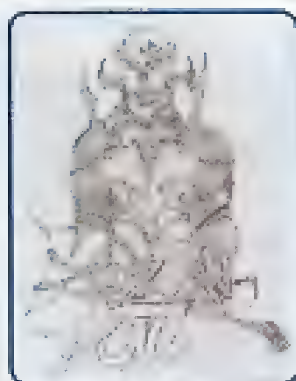
- 7 Scarlett's love
- 8 Baron Rages @ ___ (Grierson Empire supplier)
- 9 "Prefix" for some desserts
- 10 Three-wheeled vehicle
- 11 Burned, in cooking
- 12 Apiece
- 13 ___-80 (early PC)
- 16 1950s TV series ___ 3 lives
- 21 Gang's terrain
- 25 "I hope so, Commander, for ___ sake" (Vader)
- 27 Thrawn novel *The ___ Command*
- 28 *Saturday Night Live* segment
- 30 Slave dancer Tama ___ Gargan
- 31 "Wet ___"
- 33 Certain computers, briefly
- 35 ___ Kapa
- 37 Corvette roof
- 38 Sicilian volcano
- 39 Maker: Akai
- 40 ___ crystals (lightsaber components)
- 41 Word before "bit" in predictions of *Star Wars* box office results
- 42 ___ Flaven (aquatic planet in *Star Wars*)
- 45 Iron potentate
- 50 Major disconnect
- 51 Jeanne d'Arc, post war
- 53 Phrase of denial
- 54 Count played by Lee
- 56 Frankenstein's Monster-ish creature of myth
- 57 Space ___ (genre of *Star Wars*)
- 59 Enter starwars.com's community site
- 61 *Rebel Dawn* pirate captain ___
- 62 Nearly south, on compasses
- 63 "The ___ lama, he's a priest..." (Dogen Nichi)
- 64 Linguistic ending for "Hut" or "Ewok"
- 65 Non-analog video, for short
- 67 "Gimme ___!" (Indiana cheer)

Answers:

Across: 1. BAKED, 2. SPACE, 3. GENTLEMEN, 4. MESSENGERS, 5. ABREGADO, 6. FOUNDED, 7. SCARLETT, 8. BARON, 9. PREFIX, 10. THREE-WHEELED, 11. BURNED, 12. APIECE, 13. 80, 14. WAY, 15. MARA, 16. 1950S, 17. PORTMAN, 18. HARD, 19. EASILY, 20. VADER, 21. GANG, 22. ED, 23. MEASUREMENT, 24. ED, 25. I, 26. HAIR, 27. THRAWN, 28. SATURDAY, 29. ART, 30. TAMARA, 31. WET, 32. AND, 33. CERTAIN, 34. ALIAS, 35. KAPA, 36. HAN, 37. CORVETTE, 38. SICILIAN, 39. MAKER, 40. CRYSTALS, 41. WORD, 42. FLAVEN, 43. IRON, 44. BINKS, 45. MAJOR, 46. CELEBRATION, 47. CAPITAL, 48. BABY, 49. OUTSIDE, 50. DISCONNECT, 51. JEANNE, 52. SAW, 53. PHRASE, 54. COUNT, 55. FOURTH, 56. FRANKENSTEIN, 57. SPACE, 58. NEW, 59. ENTER, 60. SENATOR, 61. REBEL, 62. NEARLY, 63. THE, 64. LINGUISTIC, 65. NON, 66. CARRIE, 67. GIMME.

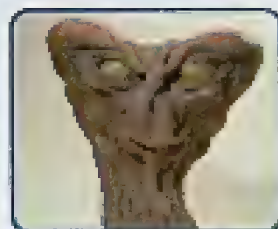
loved seeing the fan artwork in the last issue, and I couldn't resist, so here's a picture of the coolest alien ever, the **Yuuzhan Vong**. In the words of a thankful Wookiee, Ur uhl!

Peter Varallo, Age 13
Chadds Ford, PA



My favorite aliens are the **Abyssin**, the **Arcona**, and the **Givin**, which were seen in the Cantina scene in *A New Hope*. It may sound nuts, but these three have my vote, hands down! Folks that look as ugly and weird as these characters, and still have the confidence to go out and be seen in a bar, are my kind of people... I mean aliens!

Frankie "The Force" Perez
Brooklyn, NY



I own 95 of the *Star Wars* novels, and I have chosen three of my favorite aliens. Although they weren't on your list, I felt they

deserved notice. The first creature that caught my eye in the initial scene in the Cantina (*A New Hope*) was the horned **Devarenian**. One look at that guy's wicked grin makes you want to hide your money. The second creature I chose was the **Chevin** from Jabba's palace. His character was also expanded in the book *Tales from Jabba's Palace*. One look at him up close would make even the toughest stormtrooper think twice about pushing past him. And finally who can forget about the **Ugnaughts**. They are the ones that get to play keep-away with Chewbacca using C-3PO's head. What other creature has ever gotten away with that? Ugnaughts, I salute you.

Travis Nickerson
Bramerton, WA



I loved your issue on aliens! Everything down to the cover picture was perfect—you try writing a letter with Darth Maul glaring at you. I think my favorite alien species are:

Dugs, because, even if they are not the nicest people, they look cool and are unique and unlike any other movie alien I've seen.

Zabraks, because they look just nonhuman enough to be creepy—Darth Maul is still staring

at me—and they can resist pain.

Nautolans. I don't know, maybe it's just that smile again.

Megan Crouse
Harmony, NJ



Wookiees. If I had it my way, I'd be a Wookiee. I mean, come on, they're strong, they live in trees, and they don't have to wear clothes.

Gran. They're the coolest-looking aliens in the galaxy. And it's not just looks: They're polite and agreeable, too. The three-eyed beings make me want to shout out, "Galaxy Peace!"

Falleen. I know he wasn't actually seen in *A New Hope*, but Prince Xizor was there. And not all Falleen are bad guys like him. They're so mysterious.

KATHERINE HERRMANN, AGE 15
COMMERCE, CA



Thanks to everyone who sent us a list of favorite aliens. There were far too many to print, but we read and enjoyed them all. Next time (as in

this issue's "Star Wars Experience" question from the editorial), send your answers on a postcard, and let's see if we can collect enough to cover all the walls of Dave's cube.

In the News

I am a first-time writer, long-time subscriber of *Star Wars Insider*, and I echo the majority of people who write in about how the quality of this magazine is first-rate. I want to point out my new favorite section: the HoloNet News (HNN) and the CIS ShadowFeed. These articles are eerily similar to today's TV reports on oppression, war, and crime. There truly is a dark side, and *Star Wars* is a parallel in some sense to reality. A great job done by the author Pablo Hidalgo.

On a side note, a great main article on Ray Park (Darth Maul). He is right: The real *Star Wars* fans recognize him without make-up, as I did when he happened to be packing up his gym bag in the locker room of my gym in Venice, CA. I couldn't believe it! I nervously approached him, and the Darth Lord of the Sith was as pleasant as can be. He chatted with me for a couple of minutes, told me he was working on a few films that he couldn't name at the time (*U-2 Men*, *Sleepy Hollow*), and wished me a good workout. It was an honor to have met such a gracious Sith!

Giovanni Jaramillo
Los Angeles, CA

I can't believe that I have not read any comments about one of your newest additions to *Insider*—the Republic HoloNet News and CIS ShadowFeed. I think they are terrific and very creative supplements to the Clone Wars storylines. I am sure that I am not alone in feeling like the events and political turmoil described in these "articles" is actually happening in that galaxy far, far away.

I think one of the reasons that



these stories ring true is because of the current global events here on earth. Daily reports in newspapers, magazines, and on television chronicle conflicts in Liberia, Iraq, Afghanistan, North Korea, Russia, and Israel. While many news agencies tout being neutral, I do not think many readers or viewers would agree. There is always more than one side to every story. The Holonet News and Shadowfeed's writer certainly brings this truth to light. These accounts also remind us that, when it comes to war, no one truly wins.

Steve Renner
Edwards, CA

We wanted to make a "Fair and Balanced" joke here, but Rupert Murdoch's office just called to tell us they'll sue. Say, has anyone ever seen Murdoch and Darth Sidious in the same room?

The Family That Slays Together

I'm one of your dedicated subscribers. I will never be in a Star Wars movie, but I want to share this snapshot of me and my 5-year-old son, Ethan Han Aguilar. Hopefully, if you enjoy this you



can find a space to print it in your awesome magazine.

Yuri Aguilar
Newark, DE

Costume Drama

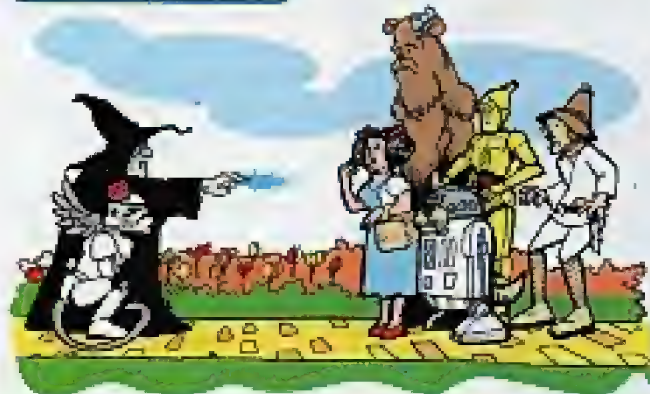
Here are some pictures of the Halloween party my friend Ryan has every year. We are really huge Star Wars fans and can't wait until Episode III. One picture is of us outside, and the other is of Steve telling Ryan he doesn't want to give him any Jell-O shooters, and to go home and rethink his life. Thanks for the great reading.

James Estle
Maysville, KY



That Dog Won't Hunt ... Jedi

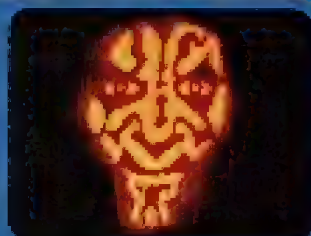
I have enclosed a picture of our four-month-old lab and our automobile plates. The American Kennel Association would know our Black Lab as Darth Vader.



Dark Lord of the Sith, but we just call him Vader. If you look closely,

you will see a small white patch on his chest. My wife refers to that as his good side. When he is a good pup, we call him Anakin. I love your magazine and always look forward to the next issue in my mailbox.

Tade Gerlscher
Lake Zurich, IL



You Put These On

Although I have never written in before, I have thoroughly enjoyed Insider since I subscribed with issue #29. I must say that each year and every issue gets better! I have especially enjoyed all of the cartoons, particularly



the featured funny on the last page, while "Star Wars Q&A" has quickly become one of my favorite departments. Mostly, I appreciate the sense of community that comes from being in touch with the latest Star Wars news and so many great and spirited fans.

After seeing all of the great crafts and artwork contributed by fans in issue #26, I felt that I had to include my own contribution. I have included pictures of two bracelets that I crafted from Colgate's line of Star Wars toothbrushes. On the left is a child-sized "Jedi vs. Sith" design, while on the right is an adult toothbrush featuring a classic Princess Leia. They are quite easy to make. First, remove the bristles with pliers, then place the toothbrush in a pan of boiling water. After the plastic is pliable (after 30 minutes or so), remove the toothbrush from the water and bend it into a circular shape. As it cools, carefully mold the plastic around your wrist. It will hold its shape well once it has cooled completely. They make a fun piece of jewelry and are quite a conversation piece.

I have also included a shot of my Darth Maul jack-o'-lantern. I created the pattern from a picture of a hooded Maul in Insider and carved it for the first time for Halloween 1999. I have carved it again each Halloween since and have gotten many fun comments from other Star Wars fans. I hope you enjoy it, too.

Allison Bentley
Omaha, NE

We'd like to add in the interest of not getting our pants wet off that no one should try this process without adult supervision and a lot of caution around the hot water. Otherwise, we think this is a fantastic way to reuse old hygiene products in the interest of making a Star Wars fashion statement.

Jedi Academy

For the past five years, I have taught fifth- and sixth-grade Social Studies at St. Thomas More School in Munster, Indiana, where I am known for my love of *Star Wars*.

My *Star Wars* bulletin boards started in the spring of 1999. I created my first one as a countdown

to Episode I. Then each year after that, I made it my tradition to have my *Star Wars* bulletin board as my last board of the year. My bulletin board this year has also helped me cope with the idea of having to wait until May 2005 for the release of Episode III. You can see the Bart vs. Darth picture in the



Traveling the Galaxy

The Ray Park issue was terrific. I look forward to each and every issue!

I was reading through the "Rumblings" and noticed your request for pictures of *Star Wars* worlds we have visited. I looked through my photo archives and came up with two worlds to which I have made long, perilous journeys.

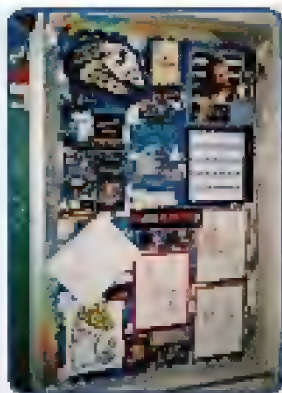
The first I visited was the lush moon of Endor. I have enclosed a picture of me at 19 years among the beautiful redwoods north of San Francisco. The Ewoks had, sadly, already moved on.

More recently, during my husband's tour of duty in Germany, I was able to visit the capital city of Naboo twice. The first was a visit to the spaceport grounds where Anakin and Padmé are walking when they first arrive at Naboo in Episode II. The Plaza de España in Seville was an enchanting stop on a week's visit to southern Spain.

The second stop in Naboo, and the last of my adventures, was within Queen Amidala's beautifully marbled throne room in Episode I. I would like to say that she was a most gracious hostess, but, as with the Ewoks, she had already moved on. The picture my travel companion took of me is of the majestic window through which the heavy-hearted queen looked in dismay as the siege of her city. This is found within the immense castle of Caserta, a short train-ride north of Naples.

These are my adventures so far. I look forward to having the chance to visit many more *Star Wars* worlds in the future.

Lisa Parrott
Bowie, MD



center; this is straight from your publication. I bought an extra copy once I saw this picture. I've also laminated my R2-D2 bumper sticker from my Insider membership kit, and you can see the card from *Star Wars Celebration II*.

My love of *Star Wars* creates a link between me and my students, especially the boys. I can wow them with my knowledge of the films, and I have even gotten a few of them to subscribe to your fabulous publication! It simply gives us something in common, and I am quick to quote many a *Star Wars* film while I teach. The students love it!

May the Force be with you!

Janelle Hill
Valparaiso, IN



Pillage People

I took this shot at the Chicago Hunger Walk this past June.

Pictured are TKs 1216, 1117, 523,

and 604 doing an iconic... well, easy-to-recognize dance. I hope you enjoy the picture as much as I enjoyed watching them attempt the dance.

JOHN DUFFY TK737
CRYSTAL LAKE, IL

Then and Now

The "then" picture is from 1980, when *Empire* was released. This was taken at my birthday party, May 25. That's me and my cousin Glenn sporting the *Underoos*! I am in the Fett top, and my cousin in the X-wing top.

The "now" picture is from Indy at Celebration II, right by the fountain. There I am 22 years later in a vintage Fett iron-on T-shirt. Some things never change!

Cristian George Macht
Chicago, IL



Luke Sleepwalker

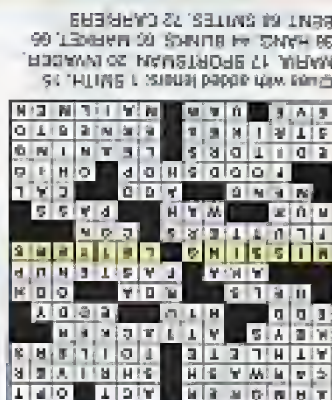
I just had to send in a photo of one of the cutest *Star Wars* fans, Zachary. With his smile from ear to ear, you can tell how happy he is with his new landspeeder bed!



built for him. Going to bed now is not such a bad thing anymore for my young

Padawan.

Steven BeVier
Medina, Ohio



SPECIAL ADDITIONS
Answers to page 62 puzzle



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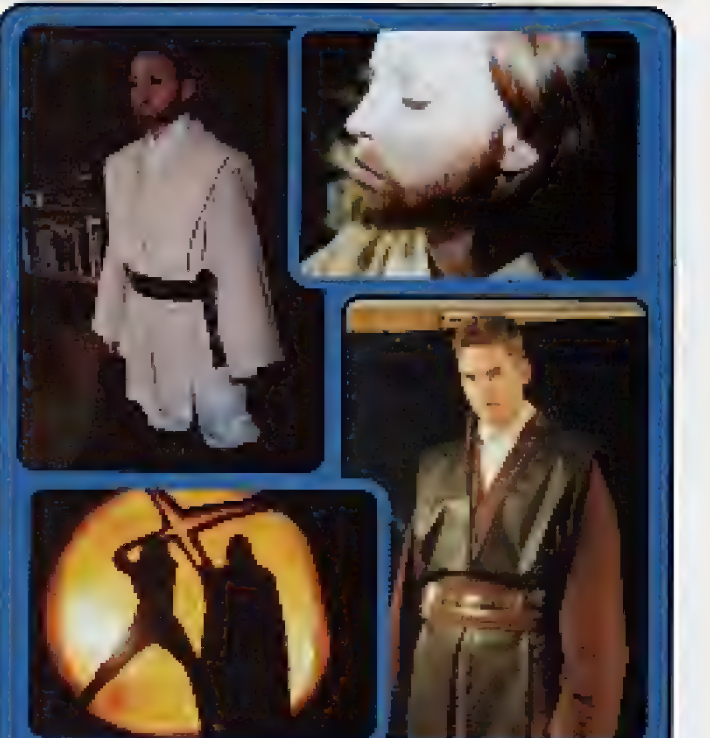
I certify that all information furnished above is true and complete.

Lisa Stevens
Lisa Stevens
Publisher



Envelope Letter of the Month

Michael Juskevics of Jacksonville, FL, sent us several examples of his Star Wars art, and our favorite was the illustration he put right on the envelope. Why don't we get more of these? After all, we love you and we won't take "I know" for an answer. Send us these postcards and illustrated envelopes, or we'll start taking everyone's Star Wars art!



Bearded Lady

I live in an area where it's hard to find Star Wars fans who are still fans in between movies. Right around June, I'm wondering, "Where did everyone go?" But there is no better way to attract fellow fanatics than wearing an awesome Star Wars costume to every function around Halloween, or any time of the year for that matter. Saint Chewie the Christmas Wookiee comes to mind. Anyway, here are photos of my wife and me as Obi-Wan and Anakin. These costumes were her idea; she even sat for an hour and a half each night while I applied her custom beard. Now, if I can only talk her into wearing full Kit Fisto prosthetics, hmmm...

I worked so hard on my pumpkin, but we never get any trick-or-treaters, so I turn it over to the front porch of the Star Wars community. Inside.

Todd Davis
Edwardsburg, MI

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Answers to Your Star Wars Questions

In *Return of the Jedi*, there's a shot of Darth Vader in the Emperor's throne room, and his lightsaber is casting a shadow. Why wasn't this fixed in the Special Edition?

In this case, there's nothing to fix; lightsabers, if they were real, would cast shadows. The blade of a lightsaber is opaque—you can't see through it. Therefore, light can't pass through it, and thus it would cast a shadow. You can see this for yourself by holding an illuminated fluorescent light tube. Sure, it's creating light, but if there's another light source in the room of sufficient strength, your shadow will show you holding that tube.

That said, the lightsabers in the films aren't cinematically realistic. Except for a section of the duel scene in Dooku's hidden hangar in Episode II, lightsabers never cast interactive lighting as they should. That would be a difficult prop and/or effect to engineer for some of the intense sword fighting in these movies.

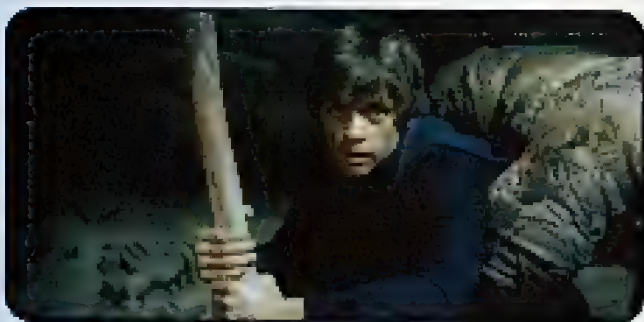
If Darth Sidious is a Sith, then why doesn't he use or reveal he has a lightsaber?

The short answer is that so far, he hasn't had need to. Sidious' style focuses on plotting, not combat. That's what he has an apprentice for.



When Luke entered Jabba's palace and fell into the rancor's cavern, why didn't he take his lightsaber with him?

Luke's lightsaber was, at the time, in a sensor-proof compartment inside Artoo-Detoo's silvery dome, and the little astromech was being reassigned to Jabba the Hutt's sail barge. The entry to Jabba's palace was lined with sophisticated weapons sensors to ensure that one of the Hutt's many enemies didn't enter the desert fortress armed. Sure, Leia did it disguised as Boushh, but she was undercover as a licensed bounty hunter. Luke didn't mask himself or his intentions, so he came unarmed.



Is the lightsaber Anakin gets in Episode II the same lightsaber Luke has in Episode IV? If not, what's the difference?

There are a number of cosmetic differences between Anakin's Episode II weapon and the lightsaber Luke inherits in *A New Hope*. The Episode II weapon resembles a cross between the blue-bladed lightsaber that becomes Luke's and the red-bladed one that Vader will wield.

The big tip off that the Episode II lightsaber isn't the Episode IV lightsaber is that Anakin's is destroyed in the Geonosian droid factory. By Episode III, he'll have a new weapon, and we'll start to see how all these lightsabers are connected.

I looked at a lot of pictures of Mace Windu in the magazine, and I couldn't help but notice that he has two different lightsaber hilts in the pictures from Episode I and II. What gives? And why does he have a blue lightsaber in Episode I and a purple one in Episode II?

Mace has actually been shown with three different lightsaber designs. One of the early promotional photos of Mace for Episode I, used in cardboard standees and elsewhere, had him carrying a rather simplistic design similar to Ki-Adi-Mundi's weapon. That's because this photo of Samuel L. Jackson had him with the wrong weapon prop on his belt. This error was caught and corrected digitally when the same photo was used in the *Episode I Visual Dictionary*. Mace's proper weapon was digitally substituted into place. Remarkably, an in-universe explanation appeared in the ongoing *Star Wars* comic series, attributing this obscure error to a Jedi tradition that had Mace and Eeth Koth exchange lightsabers for a time.

When Episode II began production, Mace's on-screen lightsaber action scenes created an opportunity to craft a fresh, distinctive weapon for the Jedi Master. This resulted in the flashier new "electrum-plated" handle seen on Geonosis. For an in-universe explanation, the Clone Wars novel *Shatterpoint* states that Mace has been continuously working on his lightsaber design for years, constantly modifying it to achieve perfection. Given the ten-year gap between Episodes I and II, that's a lot of room for modification.

We assume he had a blue lightsaber in Episode I because that's what the toys, comics, and video games depict, though Mace never ignites his weapon on screen in *The Phantom Menace*. Though the Expanded Universe has, with George Lucas' approval, shown a rainbow of lightsaber colors, in the movies he prefers to stick with green and blue for the good guys, red for the bad guys. He made a rare exception for Mace. As a personal favor to Samuel L. Jackson, he let Mace carry a blade with Jackson's favorite color, purple.

As part of Mace's tinkering, he swapped out the crystals to achieve that hue at some time between Episodes I and II. It should be noted that a *Star Wars* Tales story has Mace develop a purple-bladed weapon at a very young age, meaning that he should have that color at the time of *The Phantom Menace*; however, it looks like that tale—like many in the popular anthology series—is not part of continuity.





In *The Empire Strikes Back*, Luke gives Darth Vader a serious fight. By the time of *Return of the Jedi*, he barely breaks a sweat battling Vader. Why? As Anakin is the Chosen One and essentially a creation of the Force, Luke cannot be stronger. Anakin would be a far more experienced swordsman. What explains Luke's remarkable ability to challenge the most feared Sith Lord in the galaxy?

I'm always hesitant to answer "who would beat who in a fight and why" type questions, because despite the best efforts to quantify capabilities as hard numbers by card games, video games, and roleplaying games, the *Star Wars* universe just doesn't work that way. Random factors can always tip the balance, and skill levels are always subservient to the needs of the story. That's why a rookie farmboy can blow a sophisticated battle station out of the sky. It's the will of the Force; more importantly, it's the will of the script.

If you asked George Lucas about the outcome of the duel, he'd likely say it's what the story needed. For those craving a more specific explanation, keep in mind that Lucas has said that we've never seen true Jedi fighting in the original trilogy. In other words, the skill and power that Anakin shows as a young man is greater than what we see in the classic films. As Vader, Anakin is more machine than man, and being a half-droid construct has seriously hampered his lightsaber prowess. Luke, though not as skilful or acrobatic as the young Jedi of the prequels, is still a formidable opponent, and he is very strong in the Force.

At the end of *The Phantom Menace*, Yoda says to Mace Windu, "Always two there are, the master and the apprentice." But I thought that Darth Bane imposed that rule at the same time he imposed the secrecy rule. So how could Yoda know that but believe the Sith to be extinct earlier in the movie?



It was a huge paradigm shift from the impulsive violent actions of the Sith that ruled the galaxy a thousand years in the past to the secretive long-term planning favored by the

Sith that followed Darth Bane. Just because Bane intended for the Sith to remain in the shadows, though, doesn't necessarily mean he succeeded. Presumably, in the millennium that followed, two things happened: the new Sith methodology was revealed to the Jedi, and the Jedi believed that methodology failed. Perhaps the Jedi killed what they presumed to be the final two Sith. Or maybe they somehow found evidence to suggest that the Sith destroyed themselves. The Jedi Temple, for example, has a repository of Sith lore, including works attributed to Bane. It's easy to imagine Bane or one of his followers faking his or her death to fool the Jedi into thinking the Sith were finally gone, regardless of whether their secret was out.



In *The Phantom Menace*, when you see Darth Sidious as a hologram on the Trade Federation battleship, there are droids marching in the background. I was wondering, what are those droids?

Those little droids are PK units. They are inexpensive worker droids manufactured by Cybot Galactica. They are very affordable, long-lived, and commonly encountered. They can also be seen after the grass plains battle on Naboo, picking up the shattered remains of battle droid infantry.



OZZEL



VEERS

Vader said that General Veers emerged from hyperspace too close to Hoth when attacking the Rebel base there. Why was that a problem?

The strategy of the Imperial Death Squadron was supposed to be to emerge from hyperspace at a greater distance from Hoth, organize into attack formation, and then move inward to bombard the planet. Such regrouping is standard since maintaining combat formation over long hyperspace jumps is difficult. Ozzel (not Veers) brought the fleet out within Rebel sensor range, before the Imperials had organized for bombardment, thinking that the surprise would allow the Empire to easily defeat the Rebels. The Rebels were alerted to the Imperial presence and raised their planetary shields. What was to have been an easy orbital bombardment then became a costly and prolonged ground engagement. Vader corrected the strategic flaw by removing Ozzel from command, permanently. 🤖

Questions?

Do you have a *Star Wars* trivia question that you can't find the answer to? E-mail it to us at QandA@paloo.com or send it to: STAR WARS INSIDER, 32415 146th Place SE, Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007, ATTN: OGA.

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Illustration by Tony Moseley

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